5/1994

ECHOES

justice, peace and creation news

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FEATURING

Armed Conflict

Gang Summit in the USA

WCC Central Committee meets in South Africa

Echoes From Elsewhere

An Introduction To Echoes Magazine In Reactions, Facts and Issues From All Over The World

Life Styles ... Words and Action

The Christian Citizenship Department of the Union of Welsh Independents, an association of over 500 Welsh Congregational Churches throughout Wales, plus a dozen or more in England, has responded to the World Council of Churches programme on Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation by inviting its congregations to do some practical work to safeguard the environment.

An information kit (entitled "For His Sake") has been delivered to all its churches. It contains material to promote an enlightened discussion of environmental issues, and practical suggestions to involve all age groups in the work of safeguarding God's Creation.

Under five headings, entitled Re-processing, Energy, Fair Trade, World Life and Community Work, are listed specific tasks which congregations can share in, e.g.,

- arranging regular paper collections in the vestry and delivering them to a re-processing plant;
- ensuring that there are bottle banks in close proximity to the chapel;
- drinking tea and coffee produced by companies which secure a fair return to their workers in the Third World;
- safeguarding space for world life in chapel cemeteries, and using the minimum of pesticides to keep chapel grounds tidy.

These and other suggestions are of course part of the Green Issues agenda of various organisations. The Union's initiative seeks to underline the Christian responsibility for God's creation entrusted to our care, and centres on the words of the Apostle Paul referring to Christ "all things were created through him and for him... and in him all things hold together... For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things..." Theology and action are united in this green issues programme for congregationalists.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION please contact the Christian Citizenship Secretary,

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Windsor, Berkshire SL4 5QP

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Walk This Way... Working out a Lifestyle for the 1990s

The Justice, Peace and Creation Working Group of Quaker Home Service (UK) has prepared a study and action pack to enable Friends and others to reflect on and make changes in their ways of living in response to the injustice, unpeace and environmental destruction of the world that we live in.

It can be obtained from Quaker Home Service, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ, U.K., for £3.40.

Quotations taken from the study pack, to be used in the 'Visions' Workshop:

THE traditional economy of the Indians is almost the exact opposite of a market economy in which a person's status increases with his wealth and possessions. In the Indian community a person who accumulates is evidently one who lacks social relations with others, and has no one with whom to share.

Guardians of the Amazon, Peter Bunyard New Scientist, 1989

DON'T let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God remould your minds from within.

Romans 12:2 (J.B. Phillips)

THE saving of the world from impending doom will come, not through the complacent adjustment of the conforming majority, but through the creative maladjustment of a non-conforming minority.

Martin Luther King, preaching on the above text in Strength to Love

THE most powerful thing you can do to change the world, is to change your own beliefs about the nature of life, people, reality to something more positive — and begin to act accordingly.

Shakti Gawain

BEFORE humanity seeks to "manage the planet" it would do better to learn to manage itself, and discover how to align itself with the forces of life on Earth, following the example of the natural world, rather than always seeking to improve or second guess them.

Wealth Beyond Measure, Paul Ekins et al, 1992

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ERRATUM

Please note that in our previous issue, ECHOES no. 4, the photograph of Konrad Raiser giving his speech at the Montreat World Convention of Christian Lay Training Centres and Movements, on page 13, is not by Peter Williams, but by *John Warner, Montreat, USA.*

E d i t o r i a l

Echoes
justice, peace and creation news

Echoes is an occasional publication of the World Council of Churches' Programme Unit III on Justice, Peace and Creation.
It is intended to share information and insights on the concerns of the former WCC sub-units, now in a restructured form in the WCC.
This journal replaces: "Women in a changing world", "Youth", "CCPD: for a change", "Link", "Church and Society Newsletter" and "Forum".

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Coverphoto: Archbishop Desmond Tutu at a multi-denominational service, discussing non-violent action against apartheid; IDAF Photo

Articles for future publications are welcome.

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A NEW TWIST *by Larry Rasmussen*

It had to come to this. Some process has long been needed systematically to build a body of coherent theological and ethical thought from the rich resources of recent ecumenical engagement, not least from the JPIC conciliar process itself. Some process has also been needed to articulate theologically the integration of justice,peace and creation issues and provide the conceptual foundation for the Council's work on these. And some process is certainly needed to help renew and enrich ecumenical ethics in a season when the breakdown of human community has become a global reality, just as have the arduous efforts of people everywhere to fashion and preserve the basic fabric of social and moral life. So something like 'Theology of Life: Justice, Peace, Creation' had to emerge and, like a newborn on the Serengheti, quickly find its own sure footing.

But what is this new creature? It's the justice, peace and integrity of creation conciliar process in a different mode and with a new twist. A simple report might introduce it.

I joined several WCC guests for worship in a Black township near Pretoria the Sunday morning of the Central Committee meeting in Johannesburg. We stepped out of our car right into a delightful procession of young people with drums and batons and bright uniforms, leading the honoured guests – not us, but the congregation's own recent high school, technical and university graduates. Up the rutted street and into the church bursting with songs of choirs and a swaying, clapping, joyous congregation of young and old and in between. The only pauses in the musical harmonies of three languages strung across three hours were pause for earnest words. Words of encouragement and responsibility from a son of the congregation who spent ten years in South African prisons and is now an internationally renowned lawyer and scholar. Words of gratitude to the WCC for its pilgrimage with Black and other South Africans through the long years of anti-apartheid struggle, to arrive at last at the brink of a new society. Words of the coming week's events and a call to the tasks ahead. But all of these set amidst those other words of song and prayer, of praise and proclamation, raised to God in joy.

What was all this, except signs of life and palpable energy for life, set starkly against an all-too-familiar culture of death? Here was the power of the Spirit and the healing of body and soul, when brokenness was only too apparent. It was in fact life, and a precious culture of life, all in, with and before the God of life.

'Theology of Life: Justice, Peace, Creation' is a new initiative to continue the JPIC process, but in a certain manner. Yes, of course, there is the continuing need " to resist the threats to life" (JPIC). But the turn now is to learn ecumenically, from varied voices in all regions of the world, about that which builds up a culture of life, and to do so in a way which makes clear and available, and subject to vigorous analysis and dialogue, the specific theological and ethical dimensions of what 'choosing life' means.

Some of this will find its voice in worship life, as in the example above. More will draw from other experiences in the everyday lives of people. The point is to gather it with especial care for the integrity of the participants' own perspectives, and then together to understand it in the language of faith.

The programmatic scope of this new initiative is itself impressive, with too many components to list here. But watch for them. There is life in these seeds.

Larry Rasmussen is, with Adebisi Sowunmi, co-moderator of the Unit III Commission. He is the Reinhold Niebuhr Professor of Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary, New York City, and author most recently of Moral Fragments and Moral Community: A Proposal for Church in Society (Minneapolis, MN:Fortress Press, 1993).

The next issue of ECHOES will include a complete breakdown of the 'Theology of Life' programme, including the twenty case studies which are planned to take place in 20 different countries.

In the spring of 1993 Gang members from across the USA came to Kansas City, Missouri, united in their passion to end the killing and bring new hope to their communities.

THE NATIONAL SUMMIT FOR URBAN PEACE AND JUSTICE

report by Dr Jean Sindab

The Spirit of the Summit

We stood in a circle of prayer and called:

"Come Yahweh, come Mohammed, come Jesus, come great creator."

We raised our voices in prayer and pleading, calling upon all of them to come and help us make this urban peace and to maintain the commitment to the peace. We came to the circle to learn to trust, to love and to care for each other. We came to this circle "driven by the blood of our young" to say in one united voice "no more". We came and stood side by side, Bloods and Crips, vice Lords and Disciples, church and union representatives, community activists, former gang members, youth counsellors, women, youth, young and old, all of us yoked together by our dreams and by our fervent hopes for a brighter future. We came, 164 gang representatives with 53 observers from 26 US cities. We came 50% of us Latinos and 50% of us African-Americans. We came together for our mothers and our fathers, our sisters and our brothers. We came for all of our ancestors gone ahead of us and for all the generations to come after us. And yes, we came for ourselves. We came to this circle to be part of a historic moment when we took a step toward changing the harsh and brutal reality that our young people face. We stood clasping hands, holding on to each other knowing and praying not to fail. Knowing that there is no other way. Knowing that we are bound

to make this truce work — to make it last, to bring peace to our communities, for without it we shall all perish. That alone was our driving force as we stood in this prayer circle to close out the Urban Peace Summit.

It was most fitting to end this Urban Peace Summit in a circle of prayer because the entire three days had been a very spiritual event. There were lots of prayers, not because we were being hosted by St. Stephens, a Black Baptist Church in downtown Kansas City, Missouri, but because these young men and women who had gathered know that it was only spiritual forces which could empower them with the strength and determination needed for success.

The Summit had set itself four objectives:

1

To strengthen the gang truces in cities across the country

2

To extend the number of cities in which truces had been established

3

To put in place a process to maintain peace

4

To discuss the means of achieving community economic development

Speakers of the Summit

The Summit was convened from Friday, April 30 to May 1, 1993. Kansas City was ready for this historic event. Early on in the planning stages their had been some disgruntlement from the citizens and churches. However, as the event approached the atmosphere turned much more positive. Huge colourful billboards designed by local youth welcomed the Summit participants with the symbol of a dove with flowing rainbow colours attached to its tail. The slogan read "Let's fly to a better place".

Emmanuel Cleaver, Mayor of Kansas City, hosted an opening breakfast for the participants, declaring: "While everyone did not wish to welcome you to this city, I want you to know that the Mayor did."

The Mayor declared his total support for the Summit because of its tremendous potential to create new community leadership. For gang members whose contact with public officials is more often hostile this was an encouraging beginning. Many expressed surprise that the Mayor had actually shown up.

The most challenging and emotional remarks that day were made by the gang members themselves. On Saturday morning, representatives from several cities spoke. Their remarks reflected their analysis of the urban situation and indicated why this peace truce has a chance of being successful. The comments revealed two significant developments in their consciousness about themselves and the violence in their communities. A speaker from Boston explained that their drug dealing and violent behaviour was being driven by external exploitative forces. Another young man declared: "The plan for us is genocide. We now have to get our own plan to save ourselves."

The word genocide was used often to describe the violence taking place in the communities. The questions posed reflected a growing political consciousness:

- Are gang members committing homicide against each other or being used as instruments of their own genocide?
- How and why do so many drugs and guns come into the community?
- Why are we the majority of the people getting killed and going to jail?
- Why are our cities being ravaged?
- Why are our families the only ones being devastated? and
- Why are guns and drugs the only alternative for us in America
- the richest country in the world?

The gang members demanded an end of their demonization in the community in order to play a more positive role. The term "gang" was a negative description which they hoped the Summit would help eliminate. Just as important was the cultural renaming and reclaiming process. The reclaiming of their cultural identity is a very important part of the peace process.

pictures by jeff scott/impact visuals

Women of the Summit

Out of the 164 gang participants, 50 were women, representing all age groups, both current and former gang members, lawyers, social activists, workers and mothers. They women issued a strong challenge to the predominantly male leadership of the Summit, questioning the absence of women in the planning and the leadership of the Summit. Citing the critical role and condition of women in the community she stated: "Listen, we are in these streets every day trying to survive and risking our lives too! We want our voices to be heard."

> "Whites no longer have to hang us up on trees, we do that for them now. We will kill each other first because we do not like who we are. We have to reclaim our identity. We must be proud of our culture and our heritage and we have to stop taking our frustrations out on each other. We can and we must define ourselves in our realities."

This animated discussion led to a closed women's caucus for three hours from which the women emerged determined to stand by their men but only on an equal basis. The Latina and Black women were united and of one mind in their determination to make their presence more visible. The statement they issued is attached to this report. The men seemed to "get it" and an apology was issued and a conscious effort was made to be more inclusive of women for the rest of the meeting. On Sunday morning at the closing service all the women were asked to stand and a tribute to their strength and commitment was given. The men declared their intention to be partners with the women in the critical task of rebuilding the community.

Religious Representation of the Summit

The Summit was an interfaith event with representatives from Muslim, Jewish and Indigenous communities, as well as most mainline Christian churches. When the deliberations became tense, someone would suggest "Let's pray" and a spiritual song was introduced to get things on track.

The Baptist Peace Fellowship organised 40 prayer vigils across the country to take place around the same time as the Summit, to pray for its success. They provided liturgical and other materials to facilitate the services.

Achievements of the Summit

The Summit conducted the following five workshops:

1. Challenges of Gaining Empowerment
2. Women (added at the Summit)
3. New Visions for Urban America
4. Economic Justice for Urban America
5. Police Abuse and Brutality

*(*The reports from these workshops can be obtained from Dr Jean Sindab, the NCCC USA.)*

The closing service co-hosted by St. Stephens Baptist Church and St. Mark United Methodist Church reflected the theme of unity. One Black and one White minister standing together in courage and determination against the naysayers in Kansas City.

Rev. Mac Charles Jones, a Black Minister who had issued the invitation, preached the parable of the Prodigal Son, enlarging the story to include the congregation as also being prodigal in its responsibilities. Rev. Sam Mann, the White Minister, preached on Revelations and how in the final judgment those who had suffered from oppression would become part of the kingdom.

At the conclusion, Rev. Jones extended an invitation to the gang leaders to come forward to pledge peace. No one moved. It was a tense moment — then through a side-door came a group of young men shouting "Rev. Sam, here we come."

It was very emotional as gang members strode up to the pulpit to declare their commitment to the peace process. Two young men stood side by side one in a voice choked with emotion and said,

"Last year I tried to kill him, but today I want to say to him, I love you."

They then embraced, openly sobbing before the packed church. Another young man came forward, took off his bandanna and as a supporter of the peace declared,

"Today I am dropping my flag for the Crips."

At one point there were at least 25 or more Latino and Blacks on the pulpit embracing each other and pledging peace. Many were indeed caught up in the emotion of the moment, yet you sensed something very important was taking place. It was a thrilling and energizing moment to behold! Machismo is an important part of gang culture and for these young men whose very lives depend on projecting a strong tough image to allow themselves to be seen as vulnerable is a statement to the power of the Summit and to the possibilities for future peace.

The Summit resulted in the formation of a national grass roots coalition for peace. Regional, city and state summits are being planned to strengthen the peace process on the ground and expand to other cities. A committee will begin developing a network of fi-

nancial backers, a name and a structure for the new national movement.

The Summit did not only create a space to bring together the gang members but an atmosphere was created through which the community could also be reunited. Who will ever forget the sight of the little old ladies and other members of the church dressed up in their Sunday best coming down the aisle, side by side, with the gang members in their street attire — each accepting of the other; sitting in the pews side by side, rising to their feet together to applaud a line from a speaker or to affirm a song from the choir. It was a magical and special time. It was truly a homecoming! A coming back to the community for the summit participants who had been so marginalised because of fear, mistrust and misunderstanding and a coming back for the community to embrace its sons and daughters not out of fear but out of love and acceptance. As the gang members embraced on the pulpit there were few dry eyes in the packed church. At the conclusion, gang members and congregation stood together with hands upraised in the new peace symbol: two fingers together — instead of the traditional two fingers apart.

The role of the press and the police was constantly challenged and was a source of anger. Ironically, the negative reaction to both served to strengthen the resolve of gang members to make the peace process work. The gangs feel the police want them to continue killing each other; they fear police undercover agents will try and disrupt the peace process.

The negative coverage by the press was also a uniting factor. Most of the peace summit stories had been very negative and focused on the problems with the truce process and dimmed the hopes for success. This led to tensions during the Summit and the cancelling of several press events.

Conclusion

The urban crisis is one of the most serious challenges facing the USA today. Unemployment, economic decline, homelessness, lack of health care and decaying schools are all problems heavily weighing down the inner cities. These problems call for the mobilisation of the human resources of the entire community united in commitment to social transformation. It is in this context that we must situate the critical importance of the Gang Summit. At a time when urban communities should be coming together to search for solutions they are being splintered apart by fear, violence, crime and drugs.

It is important to understand and remember that the peace process was started by the gangs themselves. They understand the worsening reality of their community and, therefore, took the steps to change it by convening the Summit — not the churches, not the government, not the police. The young people themselves have stepped out to save their own lives and their stepping out is a challenge for the rest of society. As one participant said at the Summit:

"We are not the problem in America, we are the solution for America."

One thing was very clear: the 164 young people were serious about not only saving but changing their lives.

In Rev. Mac Charles Jones' closing sermon he challenged America by saying

"Everyone has to give up something for peace. That is an important part of the peace process. The gangs are giving up drugs, crime and violence. Now the system has to respond by giving up some of its resources and some of its power to make the peace last".

Among these young people there is a growing recognition that if given a chance and opportunity they could make a tremendous contribution to the rebuilding of America. They are no longer willing to accept their lack of contribution to society as their own fault. They are challenging the system to give them a chance to make a difference in their lives and in their communities, to expand the options offered to them.

> "It's not about big cars and flashy clothes, man, it's about paying the rent and feeding the kids."
>
> "We are not gangs — we are nations. We have structure, we have discipline, we have values and principles."

Perhaps, the high hopes for the Summit are reflected in the fact that the Kansas City police reported that crime dropped over the weekend. Despite the fears of violence that had been expressed, the only incidence connected with the event was a cross burning which took place near the motel where the participants stayed. It seemed to justify what participants said all weekend —it is America that needs the most "fixing".

Dr Jean Sindab is Director of the Environmental and Economic Justice Program, National Council of Churches in the U.S. This article is a shortened version of her original report.

Help spread the hope of the Gang Summit where you live by distributing copies of A Special Report on the Gang Summit published in "Sojourners" August 1993 special issue "A Time to Heal, A Time to Build". The issue includes a sermon by Rev. Mac Charles Jones, an article by Jim Wallis as well as interviews with Gang Summit Leaders, organisers and participants. Special prices:

10-24 copies $1.50 each
25-49 copies $1.00 each
50-99 copies $ .75 each
100 or more copies $ .50 each

Write to Sojourners: 2401 15th Street NW Washington DC 20009 - USA

ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT

by Dr Margot Kaessmann

The United Nations have invited an International Conference on Population to be held in Cairo, Egypt, 5-13 September, 1994. This gave occasion to the Executive Committee of the WCC in Sweden, in September 1993, to discuss possible ways to involve the member churches in the debate on the topic of population. On the one hand the General Secretary was asked to write a letter to the member churches in order to find out about possible statements they have issued and any activities around the matter. On the other hand Unit III was asked to take up the theme. Following the Unit III Commission meeting in Cyprus, a small consultation was called in November to draft a first working paper for the Central Committee meeting in South Africa in January 1994.

During the discussions in small groups and the Unit III committee in Johannesburg two facts became very clear: first, the matter of population was regarded as urgent by all delegates present. The deterioration of living conditions of people and the destruction of creation go hand in hand with the "explosion" of population. At the same time it is obvious that poverty, economic degradation and the low status of women are among the main causes of the rapid growth of population. Second, since the last UN conference on population in Bucharest 1974 the theme has not been taken up seriously enough by the WCC, though it was of some interest in studies such as the one on economic matters. However, since the question is closely linked to the issues of women, human sexuality, abortion and contraception, it is feared that it will be rather divisive among the churches. While the Roman Catholic Church has a very clear stand regarding these issues, the member churches of the WCC seem to have different approaches and there has not been sufficient exchange among them.

Unit III Committee agreed with the working paper that "too often, population initiatives have been viewed in their quantitative rather than qualitative context. As a result the development of the human potential has suffered." It also agreed with the general thrust that population matters have to be linked theologically with the everyday struggle for life, that population and development are interconnected and that the churches should develop holistic approaches to teaching sexual ethics and family planning. In addition to that the Committee underlined the need to examine the relation between ecological sustainability and population growth, the reproductive rights of women, the responsibility of men regarding the issue and the special significance for indigenous peoples. It supported the call of the moderator of the Central Committee for an immediate study process.

AS A CONSEQUENCE THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE DECIDED:

- ✔ *to send a delegation of the WCC to the UN Conference in Cairo;*
- ✔ *to prepare a study document and initiate a study process;*
- ✔ *to collect the contributions of the member churches to the matter, evaluate them and organise a consultation after the Cairo event;*
- ✔ *to have a plenary discussion on the issue of population at the 1995 Central Committee meeting in Nashville during which the results of the consultation will be presented.*

These decisions could mark a starting point, to clarify the position of the WCC and its member churches regarding a burning question and to help Christians in their search for orientation regarding ethical matters. This clarification is necessary and timely if not overdue.

Dr Margot Kaessmann is the Moderator of the Unit III Committee of the Central Committee.

The Effect of Structural Adjustment Policies on Women in India

by Sanjoy Ghose

Dhani Bhopalaram is a small village tucked deep in the heart of the Thar desert, in north-west India. Although it is just ten kilometres away from Lunkaransar, the market town for the entire block, it has only just this year been electrified. The whole ambience is so still, it appears that things haven't changed in centuries.

"Not generations, I've felt things change in the last few years," Gita bai says. "I really can't explain it. Ten years ago, we were like a family, the whole village. Today even brothers are moving apart, and families are breaking down, not to speak of 'community' traditions."

"I just don't feel that there's justice in the system anymore. Everything can be bought. Earlier when the Panchayat (the village council, comprised of village elders from different caste groups earlier, now replaced with an elected body) took a decision, it had to be obeyed — but now with all the police, and the law courts and the administration, you would expect it to be stronger, but people just work their way around the system."

Gita bai is thirty five years old, with one son, Kalia, aged twelve. (She had two other children, but they both died soon after they were born). Her husband, Chuna Ram, is a barber by caste, and in the Indian occupational and social hierarchy of the "jajman" system, this means that he attends to the hair cutting needs of all the families, for which they pay him in kind, at the harvest, and more when there's a wedding in the family, or some other occasion for festivity. Unfortunately, though, he's not been well for the past several months. Although he's much better now, tuberculosis has weakened him, and he doesn't have the strength to walk around.

He spends all day spinning waste cotton into thread, which he then uses to weave the base for the two cots in the house.

His credit in the village shop has dried up. Shankar, the local shopkeeper, explains: "It's not that he's a bad fellow or anything like that. If he had the money, he'd definitely pay it back. But he doesn't have the money — and although I give him credit, I certainly don't get the same facility from the wholesaler in Lunkaransar — so how can I subsidise him for ever?"

So it's up to Gita now to support the family, be the single breadwinner till Chuna Ram is better and can contribute as well. So how has she been managing? Her regular source of income is from the sale of milk to the local cooperative. In addition, if she's lucky, twice a year she gets some income from the sale of goats. If the rains are good, work on the land takes up from July to January. If they fail, like this year, then the winter months stretch long and hungry. Migration is not an option for her, with her small son and ail-

ing husband. But look at what's happening in the village. In spite of it being a drought year, the dairy cooperative has slashed its procurement price, from the anyway paltry Rupees (Rs) 4.65 per litre, to a little less than Rs 4. This has meant 15% less income for Gita bai. At the same time, the prices of dry fodder have climbed, and cluster-bean straw, the stapled fodder crop, is retailing at Rs 110 a quintal, where earlier it was available at Rs 70. Now there's no grass either, since all the grazing lands nearby have been depleted.

But fortunately, another vocation has presented itself — collecting cow dung. Until now it was worthless, and collected casually to be used as fertiliser, or fuel, or as a paste to decorate the walls or the courtyard — but now there is a truck in the village every other day, and paying up to forty paise a kilo of dung collected, and so between Kalia and Gita, they manage to make about fifteen rupees in this way. Of course what this has meant is that fuel is not as easily available, and what could be collected for free earlier needs to be bought.

Chuna Ram hasn't been spared the changes either. The prices of cotton waste have gone up astronomically, and now he can't afford to indulge himself in this pastime of weaving any more. And at the primary health centre, there's more bad news — there's been no drug supply this time again. But though this has happened in the past, this time the prices in the shops have really gone up, and it looks like he'll have to miss his medication this month.

But the most difficult to bear has been the food prices. Overnight, the prices climbed by 30%, and now there is little difference between the rates in the so-called "fair-price" or "ration" shops and the open market. For the city based, vocal, organised workers, it will probably be linked to a cost-of-living or inflation index, and be compensated in some way —but for a majority of the rural poor, who make their living as agricultural wage labourers, the future looks bleak.

So what are the relationships, and what is happening in the economic stratosphere that is bringing so much change into people's lives? Although it is difficult to establish a precise cause-and-effect relationship for each of these factors, some are transparent. As India walks into adjusting itself structurally, one of the many conditionalities is the gradual phasing out of subsidies — so the prices of food-grains in the public distribution system have risen. So also have the prices of cooking gas, kerosene and diesel. And while these may be considered "luxuries", price rises force people to substitute with other alternatives. In Rajasthan it has meant a market developing for fuel wood and dung, leading to both deforestation (increasing demand for fuel-wood) as well as desertification (since the natural regeneration of the soil, so effectively and naturally done by the dung cover, has now been halted). It has led directly to Gita bai having to spend proportionately much more of her time on the gathering of fuel wood, at the cost of finding and holding down a regular job, and caring for her husband and child. It has also led indirectly to children like Kalia dropping out of school, to lend a hand to support the family — which again means in the long run there'll be many more unskilled hands in the workforce.

As the "State" withers away, and services are increasingly privatised and brought into the marketplace, primary health centres find themselves without adequate drug supplies. In the open market, the linking up with the world patent system under the GATT has pushed up drug prices already, and the impact is most on those like Chuna Ram and Gita bai, who are not covered by any form of insurance — which is the situation of the vast majority of the rural poor.

Why has waste cotton become so expensive suddenly? For Chuna Ram, it will just leave him with time on his hands, but for the several million handloom weavers who rely on the market for their yarn, this could be the final push into poverty. Two years ago, when there was a spate of weaver suicides in Andhra Pradesh, the Government reacted quickly to put an end to the cotton exports that were responsible for the price increases. But now that the tumult has died down, the prices are climbing again.

And why has milk become so cheap all of a sudden? With the opening up of the milk industry ("delicensing"), the corporate sector has moved into the milk business, with an eye on the profits in ice-cream and cheese, and has saturated the urban area with milk from the hinterland. A the same time highly subsidised European and American dairy farmers are supplying international markets at very low prices, leading to a glut in supply in India, now one of the largest milk producing nations of the world.

But perhaps most disturbing of all is the changes in attitude, and the material quest the world is riding on. On the city streets there is an increase in crime as unemployment rises, and prices soar — but in the backwaters of rural India, as the market crosses the boundary into the home, the change is perhaps not as dramatic, but certainly as devastating.

Water, milk, labour, wood, shelter — nothing is left from the market. And as in the city, and the world, those who have more to start with in an unequal world are always better off.

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BRETTON WOODS: AFTER 50 YEARS TIME FOR A NEW WORLD VISION

In 1994, the Bretton Woods Institutions (The World Bank, the IMF and by extension, the GATT) are 50 years old. The Bretton Woods conference in the hills of New Hampshire spawned a vision of a world economy that was more just and stable than what previously existed. On the occasion of this 50th anniversary, it is time to ask: how have the Bretton Woods Institutions performed, and more importantly, what does the world need now?

by Jo Marie Griesgraber

The 44 allied nations who convened at the Bretton Woods resort hotel in the hills of New Hampshire designed financial institutions that could restore international trade and help rebuild war-ravaged economies. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) was to provide a stable world monetary system, and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD or World Bank) was to provide reconstruction loans. They did not succeed in establishing an International Trade Organization (ITO).

The Bretton Woods Institutions have accomplished much in their 50 years. The World Bank, along with the Marshall Plan and a deliberate US government policy to sustain a balance of payments deficit, helped rebuild Europe. Until 1971, when the United States eliminated the fixed link between the dollar and gold, the Fund largely succeeded in maintaining a stable exchange rate. Through 1992, the World Bank had transferred just under $290 billion in development money to reconstructing or developing governments. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), while an ad hoc substitute for the ITO, has made a major contribution to the enormous growth in international trade. As evidenced by their accomplishments, these institutions have played key roles in responding to the development goals and trade and debt problems of the Third World.

Problems with Bretton Woods Institutions

While these Institutions have accomplished much, it is time to reexamine their performance and their *raison d'être*. To a large extent, they have not fulfilled the purposes for which they were established. Further, the global economy present many challenges that are beyond their mandates.

The IMF is no longer able to maintain stable exchange rates. Instead it is engaged in getting debtor countries to service their debts and in designing stabilization programs for countries shifting from command economies to market economies. Nor is the Fund any longer the forum for international economic coordination. The major economies prefer the smaller forum of the G-7 to the inclusive venue of the IMF.

Similarly, the World Bank has not been able to fulfil the expectations that it would provide support for the development of productive capabilities in less developed countries that would result in reduced poverty. While many social indicators have improved, including improved life expectancy, reduced infant mortality, and increased literacy rates, there remain more than a billion desperately poor people in the world. Disparity of income has doubled in the last thirty years: today the richest 20% of the people consume 150 times more of the world's goods than the poorest 20%. More and more people are being excluded from development, whether they live in "less developed" countries or in "industrialized" countries.

The GATT is experiencing similar difficulties. The latest round of negotiations has suffered from conflicts over the ambitious and controversial nature of proposals for expanded GATT jurisdiction and regulation, including agriculture and intellectual property issues such as patents and copyrights. Compounding the difficulties is the fact that the trade negotiations have occurred during a time of global recession, with corresponding pressures to protect domestic markets. In addition, a new public awareness of the impact of trade on worker rights, on the environment, and on the shape of domestic production requires that these issues be incorporated into trade agreements.

Given all of the current issues facing the world community, it becomes obvious that the institutions created at Bretton Woods are simply no longer able to do what they were originally intended to do. The world we face in 1994 is fundamentally different from the world of 1944.

A profoundly different world economy

Fifty years ago there were just over 40 countries represented at the Bretton Woods Conference. In 1994, the community of nations includes some 180 countries. A

large portion of these were not represented in 1944 because they were still colonies. In 1944 the United States was the only vibrant economy and creditor country. The United States is now the world's largest debtor. Technology has transformed production and communications, and enabled nearly instantaneous money transfers across borders — amounting to about $1 trillion daily — putting in jeopardy international financial stability. The Cold War is over, rearranging the security, political and economic dynamics of the globe. The organization of production is no longer based on national industries, but on global webs of corporations which know no national home and which produce more with fewer workers.

In addition, today's world economy is in recession. Germany and Japan are both recording near 0% growth. France, healthiest of European economies, has kept its inflation down and cleaned up most if its distortions by shutting down inefficient state-run industries and privatizing others. Still, France suffers 11% unemployment. While US GDP is beginning to expand again, the unemployment and underemployment figures are relatively unaffected. Most distressing for the future health of the US economy is the federal debt, which now exceeds $4 trillion, with interest payments consuming nearly 20% of the federal expenditures. Efforts by the Clinton administration to "jump start" the economy have been hampered by the inability of recession-bound foreign markets to purchase US exports. What the UN Development Programme calls "exclusion from development" has occurred in the United States and throughout the industrialized world. The UNDP ranked 170 countries according to its Human Development Index (HDI), which is a composite score of life expectancy, purchasing power parity and education. When the United States rank is desegregated by race, white Americans rank number one on the HDI; African-Americans, number thirty-one; and Hispanic-Americans, number thirty-three. Any recommendation for revising the Bretton Woods Institutions must consider all the relevant players in the global economy. Attention must not only be focused on the less developed countries but also on those who are excluded from development processes in the more developed countries as well.

...SO YOU SEE, THE ENTIRE FUTURE OF THE INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM HINGES ON YOUR CAPACITY FOR QUICK RECOVERY AND VAST ECONOMIC GROWTH.'

New issues and new alternatives

Deriving from this changed world, there are issues calling out for international attention, but that are beyond the competence of the Bretton Woods Institutions. These include:

- the need to regulate speculative capital — the trillion dollars that move across borders daily and that can destabilize major currencies because there is no counter-balance;
- the need to resolve the debt problems of severely indebted countries in a way that legitimate debt is addressed without jeopardizing growth-with-equity economic policies;
- the need to reassess the mounting debts to the international institutions, whose by-laws preclude debt forgiveness;
- the need to promote fair trade that neither excludes large portions of the globe nor promotes increased trade through "spurious competition";
- the need to ensure equitable and environmentally sustainable development allowing for cultural diversity;
- the need to protect biodiversity and reduce consumption of non-renewable energy sources, without jeopardizing short term human well-being, especially among the poorest.

If such issues are beyond the competence of the Bretton Woods Institutions, whose responsibility are they? How can they best be addressed?

These are the kinds of issues being addressed by the many proposals which are appearing in the popular and academic literature. Some proposals, such as those of Howard Wachtel, call for incremental responses, such as for the IMF to arrange a special needs-based issuance of SDRs (Special Drawing Rights) that could be spent only to reduce multilateral debts; that a public debt authority jointly managed by the Fund and the Bank be created to reduce the size of the Eurodollar supply and reduce the strain of third world debtor countries; that the G-7 set currency fluctuation bands and jointly reduce global interest rates.

The UN Development Programme's Human Development Report 1992 calls on the Fund and the multilateral development banks to continue their original mandates, while a new global central bank, a global system of progressive income tax, and an international trade organization merging and expanding the functions of GATT and UNCTAD be created. The most expansive call for global restructuring is that of Walter Russell Mead, who suggests a world central bank, a world debtor's facility, and an international trade institution. Mead proposes "sin taxes" on countries that pollute or use child or prison labour in production.

Any new or reformed institution must deal with the changing nature of the global economy and it must be evaluated by normative criteria: will it be able to facilitate equitable, sustainable and participatory development for all peoples?

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In order to provide a platform for some of these groups to meet and to compare agendas and strategies, Unit III, in cooperation with the Centre of Concern in Washington, organized a meeting in February this year. There will not be a report of this meeting, but those who would like to know more about some of the activities that are planned by non-governmental organizations around the theme of "50 Years Bretton Woods", can write to Unit III, ECOS team.

WHO NEEDS THE WCC? THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT AND ARMED CONFLICT

DO THE CHURCHES FOLLOW JESUS THE PEACEMAKER?

by Dr. Roger Williamson

The life of Jesus in the gospels is framed between accounts of suffering. Jesus is born under military occupation in Bethlehem and his family flee to avoid persecution. He dies a death of excruciating pain, as many Jews did, on a Roman cross. His message was a message of peace, yet he was brutally killed. He never wrote a book or had access to the mass media, yet his name is known all over the world. The darkness of human oppression has still not overcome or extinguished the flame of hope which he kindled.

The record of the churches is much more ambivalent. Can we say that the World Council of Churches and and its member churches worldwide (now over 300) are a peace movement? Do we not rather have to admit that the record of the churches, and indeed of other religions, has often been one of bigotry, intolerance, restriction of human liberty and hardening of conflicts — rather than an invitation to "life in all its fulness" (John 10:10)?

In his Nazareth message, Jesus proclaimed the "acceptable year of the Lord", taking up the message of the Old Testament jubilee. What is required so that 1995 could be a step towards a "peace jubilee" rather than another year of hunger, misery and death for the millions caught in the vicious circle of man-made disaster, poverty and war? I use the term "man-made" disaster deliberately, because it is not women and children at whose door the blame for so much unavoidable suffering must be laid.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE NEW WORLD ORDER?

When communism crumbled in 1989, the Cold War officially came to an end. The spectre of total nuclear conflagration receded. Ecumenical documents such as Basel 1989 and Seoul 1990 discussed the vision of "overcoming the institution of war"(an expression associated with the German scientist, philosopher and peace researcher Carl-Friedrich von Weizsäcker). By the Canberra Assembly (1991) the mood was more sombre as the Gulf War had broken out. The New World Order was proclaimed, but failed to arrive. The "new world"could give orders, but some were in no mood to listen.

Every year, the prestigious Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) publishes its Yearbook — an indispensible tool for analysis. Every year they list about thirty active major armed conflicts, each of which have led to over 1000 battle deaths.

Most of these wars are internal wars (civil wars, coups and attempted secession). Almost all have been in the South — until recently war in Europe was considered unthinkable (except for the low-level civil war simmering continually in

Northern Ireland) when suddenly the Yugoslavian state was ripped apart amid untold suffering. Whereas East-West debates on peace used to focus on numbers of missiles in the arsenals of NATO and the Warsaw pact, now the challenge is to see what can be done about conflicts in Nagorno-Karabakh, Ingushetia-North Ossetia, Tajikistan or Georgia — each with a very specific history.

Misconceptions

We have tended to think of the victims of war as being the soldiers of one country killing the soldiers of another. Now we must look again. Most of the major armed conflicts are within states, many with an ethnic and religious element. Up to World War I, a vast proportion of the casualties of war were soldiers, but now up to 90% of the casualties are civilians — mainly women and children. A further surprising conclusion is that most of the damage is not done by the most modern major weapon systems, but smaller weaponry, including machine guns and the estimated 100 million land mines currently spread around zones of conflict. You are much more likely to be killed by a sniper's bullet or machine gun, or blown up by a landmine than obliterated by a nuclear conflagration, as General Sir Hugh Beach's paper on Peacekeeping and Weapons Proliferation[1] and the Secretary General of the Swedish Red Cross, Peter Nobel[2], emphasize.

Other fallacies abound. It is not enough to give the UN Peacekeeping Forces the Nobel Peace Prize and hope that they can create peace when major nations are not prepared to provide the mandate and resources which would make this possible. Nor should it be imagined that military intervention in line with a superpower agenda will be welcomed as peacekeeping or become automatically successful just because you put on Blue Helmets. The USA in particular is at a crucial point of decision. Can the Clinton administration develop a national defence policy which breaks out of the familiar oscillation between military interventionism ("Cops of the world") or isolationism ("Let them kill each other —it's not our business")? Johan Galtung likens this to the pattern of over-indulgence and ineffective abstinence which plagues slimmers. The USA should not give up on UN peace-keeping after Somalia, but rather ensure that it is done better.

The arms trade

After the Gulf War, the permanent members of the UN Security Council (the USA, Russia, China, France and the UK) claimed to be working on restricting the arms trade with the Third World — of which these guardians of world order had the lions' share, about 85%. But the down-turn in the arms trade has more to do with the shortage of cash than a lasting reassessment of the morality of the arms trade.

Armed conflict and the crisis of the nation state in the 1990s

There is already a world refugee crisis. My pessimistic conclusion is that this crisis is likely to get worse rather than better because of intra-state, ethnic and religious conflicts. Many state boundaries build conflict into the very structure of the nation. In a recent article[3] for the UN High Commission for Refugees, the editor in chief of the Encyclopedia of World Cultures said that in 1988 there were 111 violent conflicts worldwide involving minority-majority situations. He also referred to a 1989 survey of 261 minority groups in 99 different nations. He predicted a "long and troubled future for ethnic relations around the world". The fault-lines along which nations break apart are very often economic, ethnic/racial and religious. Very often these divisions overlap. Interfaith understanding is a vital step to prevent bloodshed and protect life. As Wesley Ariarajah of the WCC has stressed, once the killing starts, it is too late for religious leaders to discover that they should have been good neighbours.

After-care or prevention?

We now know the pattern — there is a war or famine. Hundreds of thousands of people are threatened with quick death by bullet or slower death by starvation. They move across the national boundary. When their plight reaches epidemic proportions, TV coverage in the rich countries forces governments of the North to "do something". The story quickly becomes old news. Thereafter those in the aid agencies have to carry on without the sudden blaze of publicity.

In our church agencies, the aid departments are usually by far the largest, while those dealing with international affairs and the prevention of conflict and war have a skeleton staff — to use a macabre phrase in tune with our theme. It seems that the churches have learned to respond to tragedy after it happens, but not to work to prevent it.

To use an analogy from medicine, we are prepared to work on emergency operations and aftercare, but not on preventive medicine. There are reasons for this. You cannot photograph (for the TV news) a disaster which has not yet happened. People give in response to heart-rending images of starvation, but not a political analysis predicting disaster.

But we can read the signs of the times. Many parts of Africa are in crisis. The crisis will last for decades yet, even under the best prognosis. We have a choice. Churches

could work for a new policy towards Africa — including lobbying more intensively for a remission to debts and changed IMF/World Bank attitudes — or continue to respond after war breaks out through emergency aid, as has happened in the last decades — to Angola, Burundi, Ethiopia, Liberia, Mozambique, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda. One country after another, and the list is by no means complete.

So we have the diagnosis. It is just as certain that poverty and militarisation increase the threat of war and civil war as that smoking increases the risk of cancer. Yet the world's churches wait until nation after nation is already in intensive care.

None of this is to question the work of the aid agencies in any way. Their partners in the countries in question and their own staff do self-sacrificial and effective work. The work is vital and saves countless lives. Many of the agencies themselves increasingly recognize the necessity of supporting peace initiatives, however small the chance of agreement between the conflict parties. Michael Taylor, Director of Christian Aid wrote this in his Christmas letter about Sudan: "Bringing leaders together to talk about peace-making doesn't sound as dramatic as flying in food, but in the long-run it may help to save more lives, and we have done our part in making such meetings possible. We cannot pretend they have been very successful so far."But can we not go one step further and work to prevent the conflicts developing? In 1972, the World Council of Churches and All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) played a key role in the resolution of the Sudan civil war of 1955-72, as Hizkias Assefa documents in his book Mediation of Civil Wars. The WCC recently sent a delegation to Sudan, with participation of the General Secretaries of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) and AACC to explore the possibilities for peace and show support for the Christian churches.

wcc photo archive

Long-term commitment

In 1993, there were much publicized initiatives towards the solution of three long-lasting conflicts — the moves towards dismantling the apartheid system in South Africa, the first steps towards a Palestinian-Israeli agreement, and the attempted Anglo-Irish peace initiative. Anyone who has followed these and other long-standing conflicts knows that achieving a settlement which is even reasonably just, stable and permanent is a massive task. Currently our churches worldwide are not equipped to make such commitments or provide strong support to those striving for peace. The lack of realistic, well-staffed programmes of analysis and action means that the churches' peace efforts are often restricted to a statement here and a team visit there. This does not do justice to the historical roots of such crises, the entrenched feelings, the depth of hurt and the danger of escalation. It leads to short-lived and unrealistic hopes for peace, without the pain and sacrifice of genuine reconciliation. Hope springs up like the seeds in Jesus' parable of the sower — and dies out at the first sign of difficulty.

The Programme to Combat Racism: A Prophetic Choice

In 1994, we celebrate 25 years of the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) — one of the most controversial and divisive programmes which the WCC has ever developed. It has also been one of the best in my view. It was realistic, it has been prepared to say that peace could only come when white minority rule was abolished in countries like South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. It was prepared to support the schools and educational programmes of liberation movements like the ANC, SWAPO and the Patriotic Front. It was prepared to confront big business which was

profiting from the wages and conditions in such countries. It was prepared to show in action that it regarded Mandela, Mugabe and Nujoma as statesmen, not terrorists — at a time when it was not yet popular or fashionable to say so or to award them prestigious honours. Change has come to South Africa, Namibia and Zimbabwe. But other countries in the Southern African region which have featured in the PCR, such as Mozambique and Angola, are still embroiled in tragic civil wars. Can the suffering people of these countries still rely on the world's churches?

The WCC could also lend its full support to the efforts to stop the sale of landmines — which the Refugee Council (UK) says are "undoubtedly the biggest impediment to refugees going home"

Priorities for future work

The following are some of my ideas for points to watch. Others will have other ideas or express similar ideas in a different way. What I am pleading for is an urgent, properly resourced response. Here are four issues among many.

**** Ethnic conflict and civil wars***

In the discussion generated by An Agenda for Peace, UN Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali has shown that the UN is moving towards a new generation of peacekeeping operations to confront the internal conflicts, secessions and ethnic conflicts which lead to the break-up of states. The WCC surely has a responsibility in helping with these tasks. The issues of religious and ethnic conflicts have sporadically been on the WCC Executive Committee agenda (e.g. in 1984) but the issue proved so difficult that it did not then develop into a major programme focus. There was discussion of this at the Justice, Peace, Creation Commission in Cyprus last October, but plans need further development.

**** Understanding of Islam***

I spent a part of 1993 among Palestinians in the Holy Land. Anyone who talks for any length of time to Muslims feels their deep sense of being unjustly treated by the world community. They feel that the West now uses Islam as an "enemy"to replace communism. UN Resolutions concerning the invasion of Kuwait were immediately met with the full might of the US and its allies. Resolutions to do with Palestinian rights (e.g. Security Council resolution 242 of 1967) can wait for 25 years or more before effective moves towards even partial implementation. Bosnian Muslims are massacred and the world looks on. The Ayodhya mosque is torn down in India and the world turns a blind eye. There is a deeply held perception among Muslims that their rights and religion are not respected. A salutary goal for Christians would be to seek to understand the depths of these feelings and the reasons for them. As Geries Khoury and his Palestinian colleagues, Muslim and Christian, at the Al-Liqa Centre in Bethlehem show, opposition and confrontation are not the only models for Christian-Muslim relations through the centuries. There have been and can be other approaches built on mutual knowledge and respect. Again, WCC has worked on Christian-Muslim dialogue for years — the member churches are the weak link.

**** Focus on China***

The process of disintegration in the former Soviet Union should fill us with concern when we contemplate the changes which China is likely to have to make in the coming decades. Yet how many of us, outside China, have an appreciation of Chinese history, politics, culture and tradition?

**** Peace, security and proliferation issues***

Among non-governmental organisations, the WCC has a position of privileged access to the United Nations system.

The Commission of the Churches on International Affairs uses this position, for example, to make representations each year through the UN Human Rights Commission. Past studies have worked on militarism and the issue of nuclear weapons (cf. the 1981 Amsterdam hearing and subsequent report Before It's Too Late.) Should we not be more energetic as churches in regularly using the opportunities to access the UN system on peace and security issues?

In early 1993, WCC held a seminar which formulated guidelines on the arms trade and proliferation which have now been circulated to the churches. Action is needed to restrict the arms trade radically. Governments have been severely embarrassed by the failure of former US Presidents (Reagan and Bush) and a former British Prime Minister (Thatcher) to admit culpability or even to remember arms transfers to the Middle East — in what one cartoonist called an outbreak of "Saddamnesia". The World Council of Churches could be helpful in pressing for the transformation towards a peace economy in the major exporting nations —for example, the USA has had a huge arms export bonanza in conventional arms to the Middle East since the Gulf War. The Brandt, Palme, Brundtland and South Commissions reports all highlighted the evil of the arms trade. The South Commission chaired by Julius Nyerere stressed that "by 1980 more than ten million people had been killed in wars fought in the Third World"and that "only a few devel-

oping countries can rightly claim that their military expenditure is proportionate either to any external threat or to the resources at their disposal" (p. 53). Comparing the data from World Military and Social Expenditures 1993 is a sobering exercise.

The WCC could also lend its full support to the efforts to stop the sale of landmines — which the Refugee Council (UK) says are "undoubtedly the biggest impediment to refugees going home". Landmines have been called the weapons that never miss. Because of NGO pressure (including the ICRC, Vietnam veterans and doctors) and a US export moratorium the issue is now firmly on the UN agenda. But we should not be complacent about the other end of the scale. In 1995, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty comes up for renewal. There are concerns about the nuclear aspirations of certain countries like Iraq and North Korea, but the major nuclear weapon states also have obligations to show that they are working towards nuclear disarmament. Here too the ecumenical movement has work to do in coming months. This is preventive medicine for the global "body politic".

Who needs the WCC? Potential Victims of Future Wars

I have argued that the work of the WCC needs significant strengthening in the area of the prevention of war. After World War II, there was an enormous effort on behalf of refugees in Europe. As that need receded, much of the concern was re-channelled towards development aid. I am arguing that a similar qualitative reassessment is now required with a shift towards prevention of war, whilst not neglecting "cure". To help prevent even one war would mean that hundreds of thousands of people would never need to become victims, would never be driven from their homes as victims of "ethnic cleansing".

In the twenty years that I have been following and supporting the work of the World Council of Churches I have seen what that work means particularly to the people who are poor and "close to death"(Jon Sobrino). In the work on human rights of the British Council of Churches, the worldwide ecumenical connection brought us into contact and some measure of solidarity with Philippinos in prison like Ed de la Torre, Korean human rights workers and church activists suffering repression, the families of the disappeared in Latin America. Black rejoicing in South Africa over the grants from the Programme to Combat Racism was paralleled with white shock and incomprehension — both in South Africa and wide sections of the British churches. The WCC has sought to hold together the rooting out of anti-semitism from theology with the insistence on the national rights of the Palestinian people. The continued contact with the WCC was a source of great encouragement to the Christians in the former German Democratic Republic who sought to make a positive contribution to their society, rather than retreating into passivity and inner emigration. The WCC has often been criticised by the British churches. But the British churches need the world church to prevent them lapsing into passivity and insularity. In any major city in Britain, one cannot escape the presence of the cultures and religions of the world. The dialogue of cultures and faiths is the only possible antidote to the resurgence of nationalism, racism and religious intolerance.

But as I have suggested in this article, the achievements of the WCC always threaten to be overwhelmed by the crises and armed conflicts of today. We can see the storms ahead already. Ecumenical tradition does not mean self-congratulation or nostalgia for the "good old days"of the WCC, but drawing the courage to risk controversy, the tenacity to engage in deep analysis of the deeper roots of problems and the long-term commitment to stick with unfashionable issues. The time to think about a war is before it happens. Can the WCC help Christians in areas of tension to develop a praxis of reconciliation before the crises which are ahead of many nations of the world?

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Notes

1 *H. Beach, Peacekeeping and Weapons Proliferation, Council for Arms Control, London, 1994.*

2 *P. Nobel, "Foreword", in: B. Sjöquist & R. Williamson (eds), Selling Weapons: A Deadly Business, Swedish Red Cross, Stockholm, 1993, pp. 9-12.*

3 *D. Levinson, "Ethnic Conflict and Refugees", in: Refugees, August 1993, pp. 4-9.*

A LACK OF GENERO SITY

A personal involvement

While Israeli army personnel were cleaning the floods of blood splattered over the walls and floor of the Cave of the Patriarchs — holy to Islam and Judaism and venerated by Christians as the burial place of the fathers of Monotheism — diplomats and politicians struggled to keep alive the peace agreement, sealed by the Rabin-Arafat handshake on the front garden of the White House in Washington DC, September 13, 1993.

At the time I wrote in my publication Israel & Palestine that I thought — as I still do think — this is a bad agreement that will lead to bloodshed, much greater than anything we had imagined hitherto in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I added that one must try to use this agreement to bring about a real peace — one based on the creation of an independent Palestinian state next to the State of Israel in, give or take some border arrangements, the 1967 borders of Israel.

by Maxim Ghilan

It was and is also my belief that two such states are bound, sooner or later, to become part of a federation with Jordan, perhaps with Lebanon too; and ultimately — part of a confederation of ALL Middle East countries. Bound, that is, if one wishes to prevent a nuclear holocaust of Arabs and Jews that would dwarf the Nazi genocide of Europe's Jews.

I developed this approach long, long ago, when I was still a journalist and writer in Israel. For over 33 years now I have been fighting for a just peace based on the two-states solution: first as a morally motivated intellectual in Israel, then as a political exile.

In the course of these years, and of the 24 last ones in particular, I founded Israel & Palestine Political Report — which as early as 1971 said what Mr. Rabin is saying now: that one must make peace with the enemy. Adding, however, that this must be a just peace. Any other kind won't work when two peoples live in the same land.

In the course of these 24 years I was active, openly and in secret negotiations, in helping the Israeli peace camp and the Palestinian PLO mainstream hold talks, know each other better and save lives.

Also, I was active in the sustained defence of Palestinian human rights; again -concentrating in saving lives.

Finally, in November of 1993 I was allowed by the proper authorities to return to Israel (and was well-received, too) but found to my dismay that the hand-shake between Arafat and Rabin was not being translated, on the ground, by a real peace accord or by true wishes for peaceful coexistence based on generosity and mutual understanding.

Indeed, it is my view that a lack of generosity is what puts into danger implementation of the Israeli-Palestinian September 13 agreement. What is needed is not punctilious working of agreements and documents, nor is the precise order of array of soldiers and customs officials that essential. What is needed is the generous sharing of power, of land, of the country and all it contains.

This generosity is lacking, as yet, on both sides.

And, of course, the generosity of the winners is much more important — and its absence more catastrophic — than that of the resisting vanquished.

This is why some of us on the Jewish side understand that the conditions of capitulation imposed on the Palestinians now are senseless and counter-productive. They will lead to more war and more heart-broken suffering.

THE GENOCIDE'S INHERITANCE

Seen from the Jewish side, the struggle for a peaceful Middle East has also — maybe first of all — been a fight for the soul of Israel, indeed of contemporary Judaism as a whole. A struggle between the Judaic schools of Hillel, the "liberal" thinker, and Shamai, the "conservative", whose followers, suspicious of the "foreigner", the Goy, are now winning ever more ground in Israel and throughout the Jewish diaspora.

Their suspicion, of course, has been magnified many times in the wake of the Nazi Genocide of millions of European Jews, 1933-1945. Since then, many conservative or average middle of the road Jews and most Israelis are suspicious of all others.

To this one must add the sociological changes which occurred in Judaism, world-wide. Outside of Israel, Jews have evolved from a lower-and-middle classes population to upper-middle and even upper-class groups, in most European countries and certainly in America. A lack of interest in the preoccupation of the poor, a lack of solidarity, has appeared where before Jews were among the first to defend liberal, left-wing or simply humanitarian stands and struggles.

At the same time, Zionism has imported into Israel many hundreds of thousands of Oriental Jews who are now a majority in the country (about 65 percent). Many of these are the poor of Israel, and also the populist followers of the right. Their nationalism is stronger than that of more affluent, European-and-Israeli born ones.

Thus, Judaism as a whole has moved to the right. Much of it to the camps of intolerance, both social and nationalist.

A strong Judaic contingent for peace, justice and solidarity with the Third World still exists. It is, however, relatively silent and totally in the minority. Worse, Jewish and international media refuse to give it a voice, deeming it not significant as a trend.

So, in my opinion, the very future of Judaism is threatened. Because Judaism, in the modern world, can only live on in the spirit of Hillel, as partner of others, as a brother of Christianity and Islam in the moral sense rather than in the sense of politics.

In the wake of the European Jewish genocide, the followers of Shamai and of a "strong state" framed a slogan: "Never Again!"

This slogan is semantically incomplete. What they were really saying is: "Never again should this happen to us". And there, they are of course right.

But even this slogan is short of a moral assertion. We, disciples of Hillel, also believe in "Never Again!".

Only it should be: "Never again should this happen to anybody, not just to us Jews".

Neither to Cambodians; nor to Chinese; nor to Africans; nor to Arabs. Nor, indeed, to *ANYBODY* else.

This is why we believe in helping human beings because they are human beings; in ecumenical cooperation; in solidarity with the Third World.

And in cooperation and friendship with, and social justice for, Arabs — whether inside the borders of the State of Israel or throughout the Mashreq, the Levant, which is called in the West the "Middle" or "Near East".

ZIONISM AND JEWISH ORTHODOXY

The problem with the Middle East is that this is not, as one would expect, a purely social and economic conflict. It is a struggle of Beliefs, with a capital B; a fight between the self-assured beliefs of two, or even more, sides which are totally, utterly convinced that their truth is exclusive, that they are the sole owners of the Holy Land, by right, history and — in the case of a majority of both Jews and Arabs in historical Palestine/Israel — that their ownership of the Land is God-given: one does not forgo a God-given grant.

The basic nature of the conflict between Jews and Arabs was not originally religious. In fact, Zionism started as a secular Jewish movement, created out of a need to emancipate Jews who lived in an anti-Semitic Europe, up to the middle of this century — sometimes facing local or global violence which, in 1933, culminated in the systematic, intellectually bestial Nazi genocide of Jews.

The Zionist movement, as founded by Theodor Herzl, was a response to anti-Semitism: a "if you cannot beat them — leave them" sort of response. Up to the 1967 Six Days war, Israel was a secular state, in which the Orthodox Jewish movements not only were not in power but in which their extreme fringes — the Neturei Karta, but also Agudat Israel and Poalei Agudat Israel movements — opposed the structures and strictures of the "Zionist State". Neturei Karta refused to recognize Israel; the other Orthodox extremists lived with it but did not approve.

In 1966 the Orthodox vote in Israel was 14-16 percent. In 1992 it was nearly 24 percent. but this rise constitutes only the top of a submerged iceberg. Real influence of the Zealot Orthodox Jewish parties is huge in today's Israel as they control the Ministry of the Interior, which alone decides who and

how one can marry, divorce, register one's children's national and religious identity and even be buried.

The Orthodox also have enormous influence on education, with their own religious, orthodox and ultra-orthodox educational networks, all paid and protected by state funds and regulations. They succeeded in having the left-of-centre Minister of Education Shulamit Alony fired (she became Minister of Science and Technology and remained Minister of Culture); and they have a predominant voice in all day-to-day happenings in the life of the average Israeli —Jew, Christian or Moslem. (There is no proviso in Israeli law for agnostics or free thinkers, as marriages have to be celebrated according to a religious discipline).

How did this happen? The Declaration of Israeli Independence (Israel has no constitution) was signed in 1948 by members of the first Constituent Assembly in a spirit of democracy and secular philosophy.

However, in the fifties, then Prime Minister David Ben Gurion granted the Orthodox parties control of the Ministry of the Interior and of the Ministry of Religion in order to diminish the influence of the Zionist-Marxist MAPAM party, which he perceived as a leftist MAPAM party. As years passed, Ben Gurion also became more and more mystical and traditionalist in his views and this influenced the decisions of the old "secularist" founder of the State of Israel.

FUNDAMENTALIST ORTHODOXY TRIUMPHANT

The parties thus taking control of Israeli civil life were Orthodox-Zionist. When Menachem Begin became Israel's first right-wing Prime Minister, in 1977, the leading Orthodox coalition partner of Begin, the MAFDAL party, moved more and more to the right. For the first time Zionism and Orthodox Judaism, hitherto two opposites, became welded into one whole.

This included most of the hitherto anti-Zionist fundamentalist, Orthodox groups — the so-called "Haredi" or "Fearful of God" parties; as well as "schools" of thought led by this or the other famous Rabbinical dynasty and, in addition, a new political phenomenon: the Oriental-Jewish Orthodox SHASS party, which served as both a partner of centrist Labour and of right-wing Likud.

The secular governing parties — Labour or Likud — granted this whole microcosm of Orthodox and ultra-Orthodox elements considerable bounty in the form of political control of education, civil life, religious tribunals and so on, but also in huge amounts of cash.

Thus, for instance, each Orthodox sub-strata has its own educational system in Israel, which escapes, often, control by the Ministry of Education and perpetuates a sector of voters and political activists — funded by their opponents of the secular sector.

This evolution was underpinned by a national, psychological development. More and more Israelis opted for colonization of the territories occupied by Israel since the 1967 war. This became particularly apparent in the 1977-1992 era, in which Likud ruled the country under Begin and Itzahk Shamir; but many Labour stalwarts also opted for "Greater Israel" ideas and defended the principles of total annexation and even, in a minority of cases, of the "transfer" — expulsion — of all Arabs on the territory of historical Israel/Palestine.

A friend of mine, a social worker belonging to Labour, best summarized this trend when she told me: "Before 1967 I was against the right-wing parties. But after the Six Days War victory I started going to the liberated lands. I loved them! I did want them to remain ours — but had no moral justification for this wish, then. At that point I started reading the Bible and found that, contrary to what I had been taught at secular schools and colleges, this land was ours, and ours only, God given at that.

"I changed my views and have been for the whole Land of Israel since. And my brother has become a settler in the new territories".

MUTATIONS OF PALESTINIAN BELIEF AND DESPAIR

This evolution inside the Israeli camp runs parallel to what is happening among the Palestinians.

The Palestinian Arab people is of mixed origin: Arabs of many kinds; former Christians who descend from the Crusaders; former Jews who converted to Islam; Druze with a different ethno-cultural specificity but who belong to the overall Arab culture of the area, which is Islam-backed; and so on.

From the beginning of Islam, Palestine — and Al Quds, "The Holy" as Jerusalem is called in Arabic — had a predominant, mystical role in Arab lore and tradition. Jerusalem, with Mecca and Medina, was one of the three Holy Sites of Islam. Even today, the Wahabite Saudi Arabian and the Hashemite Jordanian dynasties struggle over who shall have the honour to become the officially recognized, sole patron of Haram as Sharif — the holy Islamic site built on Temple Mount, where the destroyed Jewish first and second temples had stood, until Rome took over Palestine.

In the Ottoman empire, Palestine was part of a Sandjuk, a subterritorial division of the Syrian province or dominion. The Palestinian Arabs, as Arabs throughout other areas assimilated to the Ottoman empire, chafed under the yoke of non-Arab, Turkish domination (as did some of the very few Jews then living in Palestine). Therefore, Arabs became the allies

of the French and the British, in World War I, helping, among others, the struggle of Lawrence of Arabia.

When Palestine became a British Mandate, the Arabs of the Middle East wanted it to become part of an Arab kingdom; but the British and the French cut the Mashreq into pieces —one of them named Palestine. And Jewish immigration began.

Both these facts developed an autonomous, local Palestinian nationalism. It was based, at the time, on the Hamulas, the big families and clans, the biggest of which were the Nashahsibi and the Husseini clans. The Husseinis became the flag-bearers of Palestinian nationalism and demanded independence. They fought the British, while others were more conciliatory.

Then came the 1947 UN decision to partition Palestine into one Jewish and one Arab state. War broke out between Arabs and Jews. When armistice was declared, in 1949, only the Jews had a state — Israel. And many hundreds of thousands of Palestinian Arabs had been expelled to other Arab countries, mainly Lebanon and Jordan.

At first the Palestinians, who still call the 1948 war of Israeli independence the "Naqlah" or catastrophe, were helpless. Then the PLO was created. For a long while it was the plaything, indeed the instrument, of other Arab countries.

When, in the fifties, Gamal Abd al Nassar became Rais, or head of Egypt, and founded Nasserism — a pan-National Arab movement which wanted to unify all Arabs into one nation led by himself — many Palestinians became "Nasserites". All Palestinians saw in the might of Abd al Nasser the only hope they had to become free again.

In 1960 Fatah, Yasser Arafat's movement, was created. It liberated the PLO from total Arab states' control and has dominated it since. It also started a guerrilla war of liberation with many acts of blood-drenched terrorism hitting at Israeli, Jewish, European, American and Arab targets. These acts were carried out by a number of components of the PLO; the left-wing/nationalist PFLP, DFLP and smaller groups; but also by Fatah and the clandestine Black September it had created, and which was named after the repression of the Palestinians in Jordan in 1970.

The political climate of the world, in the sixties and seventies, caused a large minority among new, young Palestinian intellectuals to adopt Marxist and other left-wing ideas. They put their trust in Marxism and in the Soviet Union, just as their fathers had put theirs in Gamal Abd al Nassar and their grandfathers in the Arab States and their own feudal clans.

The "masses", however, particularly in the refugee camps of Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and so on, continued to support mainly Arafat's Fatah.

As of the mid-seventies, Arafat's lieutenants — Abut Mazen, Abut Iyyad, Abut Jihad, Issam as Sartawi — started secret moves to discuss a possible peace with the Israeli Jews. I was active in these secret talks.

CHANGES OF PALESTINIAN SOCIETY

In the meantime, Abd al Nasser had fallen and died, in the wake of the Israeli victory of 1967; the United States had imposed a new Mid-Eastern order — as early as 1973 — in the wake of the 1973 war. Lebanon's invasion by Begin/Sharon had come and gone, in 1982. And the Gulf war — with its expulsion of 400,000 Palestinians from Kuwait, mostly to Jordan —became the crowning disaster of all this.

This evolution, in fact, started much earlier — in fact, in 1977 when the ill-begotten Camp David agreement was signed by Egypt and Israel under American patronage (already!). Camp David, which, indirectly, caused the invasion of Lebanon and the Gulf war — just as the Arafat-Rabin agreement will cause future anti-Iran and anti-Iraq wars; maybe even additional conflicts.

Meanwhile, too, the Palestinians lost base after base, Palestine before Lebanon, Syria (which became anti-Arafat) before Iraq; Libya before everybody else.

After 1982, the PLO was forced to moved its centres of power and decision to far North Africa: the PLO's "Government" to Tunis; its armed men to Algeria, Libya, Yemen, even Chad.

While peace was making inroads in the Palestinian camp, and while in Israel more and more people accepted the need to talk peace "with the Jews", the situation of the Palestinians had become militarily and politically untenable.

Seven years ago the Intifada, a popular insurrection, broke out in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, occupied and colonized by Israel since 1967. It came as a surprise to the PLO leadership, but they soon adopted it.

This insurrection, at first non-armed and nicknamed "the revolt of the stone-children", was savagely repressed, first by Israel's then right-wing-and-centre coalition government and then, after 1992, by the present centrist Labour government. Itzhak Rabin, now Prime Minister, was then the Likud-Labour coalition's Defense Minister and ordered his troops to "break arms and legs" of stone-throwing children and others. Fourteen thousand prisoners still languish in Israeli jails and prison-camps. One hundred and thirty thousand Jewish settlers, armed to the teeth, live in the best and most arable of West Bank lands. Water resources are under sole Israeli control. Hundreds of thousands live in unbelievably squalid conditions in overcrowded camps of the Gaza Strip — the globe's most over-popula-

ted region. In the meantime, the Arab states had lost their pretended unity; Abd al Nasser was dead; another pan-Arab movement, the Baath all-Arab party, had been split and taken over by Syria's and Iraq's dictatorships; the Soviet Union and post-Stalinist Marxism had collapsed; Fatah had revealed itself as a moderate force talking peace with the Israeli rulers; and the condition of the Palestinian popular masses had not only stagnated, but it had worsened considerably, whether in the gradually dispossessed Occupied Territories of Palestine or in the Arab countries.

peter williams, wcc

All was not bad, however. Under Israel's harsh rule the people of the Occupied Territories learned many lessons from their oppressors. Internal Israeli democracy—democracy for Jews only, alas — became a model for a civil Palestinian society in the Occupied Territories.

The proliferation of Palestinian organisations and institutions there, financed from outside by the PLO with monies from Arab countries' grants (these countries thus wishing to buy insurance from Palestinian extremists) also gave the people of the West Bank and Gaza Strip force, sophistication and democratic or semi-democratic structures.

Likewise, the emergence of a relatively affluent Palestinian diaspora or "Ghorba", in Arab countries, in the United States, Canada and the West European nations (the United Kingdom in particular), also contributed to the renovation of Palestinian society; to its modernisation; to the renovation of political institutions (of which the PLO became the lynch-pin but by no means the only vector); and to national solidarity beyond borders, in a manner similar to that of Jewish people.

Contrary to the Jewish evolution in the post-1945 era to our days, the Palestinian richer classes did not become cut-off from socially disadvantaged Palestinian masses: after all, direct family ties persisted between many in the camps, those in the Occupied Territories and Palestinians in more affluent countries — who went on to contribute to the welfare of their poorer brethren and to the political institutions centred around Arafat's PLO.

THEIR NEW HOPE: FUNDAMENTALISM

As Palestinian hope after hope shattered, colonisation and Jewish settlement of occupied Palestine increased and the PLO lost its revolutionary — and therefore legendary — role in the Palestinian popular mind, an Islamic revival was taking place, world-wide — part of the fundamentalist religious revival which has been spreading, over the last 15 years, and which was at first encouraged (e.g. in Afghanistan and Latin America) by the West against insurrection and "Communist subversion", particularly in the Third World.

Ayatollah Khomeiny's revolution in Iran, and subsequent takeovers of Sudan's, Algeria's and Afghanistan's societies by fundamentalist Islamic movements, together with the downfall of the Soviet Union, shifted the focus of preoccupation in the West and caused Islam to become, for American and European decision-makers, the main contemporary danger to consumer society and to the global market economy. Perhaps in an exaggerated manner.

For those Palestinians who got nothing and lost almost all, the fundamentalists in the Arab world became the precise opposite of what they are in Western eyes: the only hope left, an emerging threat to post-colonial and colonial arrangements — including occupation of the West Bank and Gaza by Israel. The myth was created of still another lonesome, gallant knight of Arab-Palestinian masses.

And thus, as Arafat negotiated with the Israelis, and tried to move closer to the United States (considered to be the only possible arbiter of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict), the hopeless moved towards Islam.

HAMAS, an Islamic Palestinian movement, and the Islamic Jihad, a more extreme one, split into two separate components, emerged in the West Bank and, most predominantly, in the Gaza Strip. Before September 13 they had demanded from Arafat 40 percent of all National Council (Parliament) seats as a condition for adhering to the PLO (they did not get them and did not adhere). Now, they are said to have a far larger influence than that, in the occupied areas.

Why? After the Oslo agreement the Islamic influence had temporarily diminished. But as negotiations dragged on in Taba, Cairo, Davos, Paris, Geneva and Cairo again and as it became clear that what was being negotiated was the creation of a Bantustan or two out of four or five, planned for the Palestinians in the Occupied Territories, to be surrounded by Jewish-Israeli settlements and army-camps in the most fruitful regions of these areas — HAMAS and Islamic Jihad's force surged. The former's clandestine and armed units killed more and more Israeli soldiers, settlers and civilians, including women.

Fatah, meanwhile, was being torn into pieces, both in Tunis and inside the territories. The younger generation — centring on the clandestine, armed "Fatah Hawks" — became predominantly anti-Arafat. The older generation sided with the PLO leader and the Oslo agreement signed by him.

The nationalist/left-wing groups — George Habash's PFLP in particular — also became stronger. But the influence of all these forces was far weaker than that of the fundamentalists.

The Islamic Jihad and HAMAS enjoy the help of many Qadis who use the mosques as public rallying points, both after the Friday prayers and as towers broadcasting calls for help and propaganda messages from the loudspeakers on the mosques' towers, from which the muezzin usually calls out for prayer and asserts, five times a day, that there is but one God and that Allah is his prophet.

They also enjoy the assistance of a wide-flung network of religious schools, welfare organisations, women's groups and institutions that help the martyrs' sons— i.e., the children of those killed in battle or under torture — and families of those in jails and prison-camps.

Similar networks funded by the PLO have been cut off without a cent by the Arab Gulf potentates, under pressure of the United States (former State Secretary James Baker formulated this "financial strategy", which forced the PLO to toe the line set down by the Madrid negotiations and, later on, by the Oslo agreement's strictures).

The Gulf war, during which Arafat sided vocally with Saddam Hussein's Iraq, was both the pretext and a sincere ground why the Arab Gulf leaders cut off the Palestinian national movement.

They did, however, continue to fund the Islamic Jihad and HAMAS. In 1989 alone, Saudi Arabia granted 83 million dollars to these two groups; more in subsequent years.

Iran, too, funds the fundamentalist Palestinians — although these are Sunni Moslems, not Shia, as the Iranians are.

This development has, by the way, worried many Christian Palestinians (about 20-24 percent of all Palestinian people) who see their role compromised, as indeed it may be in the promised democratic Palestinian society of the future, if Islamic fundamentalism wins.

At first, Israel's governments unwisely let the fundamentalists develop, as a counter-fire to nationalist, PLO supported activity.

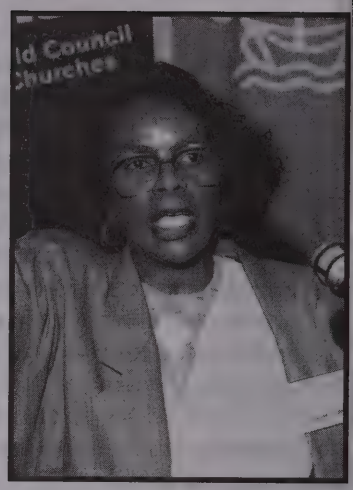
Now that the Israelis are dealing with the PLO, and have accepted its capitulation, the fundamentalists are the main enemy. But it is too late, far too late for such a change of mind.

Islamic fundamentalism has become the Palestinians new hope. It may be ephemeral, as were Feudalism, Nasserism, Baath pan-Arabism, Communism and even the PLO's role as saviour. But Islamic fundamentalism is, nonetheless, the only hope the Palestinians seem to have left, in the nineties.

Which is still another reason why those of us who believe in a just peace must do our utmost, nowadays. Not as enemies of Islam but, rather, as Jewish and Christian friends of Islamic tradition — if not of ill-advised Islamic extremism.

Maxim Ghilan is the founder of the publication Israel and Palestine - Political Report. Subscription information and a free sample issue can be obtained through:
MAGELAN / I & P, B.P. 130, 75463 Paris Cédex 10.

BIBLE STUDY



by Rev. Yvonne Delk, given at the WCC Unit III Commission Meeting, October 1993.

ISAIAH 11:1-9

1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD—
3 and he will delight in the fear of the LORD

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears;
4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decision for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
5 Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash round his waist.

6 The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.
7 The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
8 The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.
9 They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

These words from the Book of Isaiah 11:1-9 are spoken in a particular context. It is the context of internal and political upheaval. Jerusalem, war conditional and war shaped, is in crisis. The threat to life, to community, to family is real.

The words are also anchored in another context. It is the context of promise and covenant —specifically a promise made in Jerusalem to the Davidic dynasty as an instrument for alternative policy and possibility in the near East.

The question is whether the promises of God have a chance in the face of entrenched political, social, economic realities. The book of Isaiah believes profoundly that God's promises will prevail in, with, and through the political, economic, social realities of the times. The book of Isaiah affirms with a passion and a certainty that the root of justice, peace, integrity of creation is a theological possibility and not a socio-economic possibility. The chance for harmony and wholeness — shalom for the earth rests in the trustworthiness of God and the issue of God keeping faith with God's promises.

The Isaiah text that authorizes and affirms this conviction has two features that are worth our noting.

First the text is poetry. It is not an argument about policy, but daring, inventing, poetry that opens up and offers avenues from newness.

Second, the text is poetry on the lips of God as a promise from God.

That it is the speech of God is a beginning. The text and every use of the text is a political act as daring and as outrageous as was Martin Luther King Jr. when he said "I have a dream" or Sojourner Truth when she said "And ain't I a woman!". Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation is a dream that is uttered first on the lips of God — a dream that speaks against all settled political reality — an act of imagination in which we are invited to participate. The text invites us to dream along after God in a certainty that the world judges to be outrageous.

The poem begins abruptly: Isaiah 11:1 - A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse. While the bible passage is linked to Jesse, the father of David, some would move away from Jesse towards Jesus as the real shoot from the stump. I want for the sake of this Bible study to move beyond David and Jesus and take the poem as a vision of a new humanity in which God raises up new life where we least expect it. The stump is any closed-off historical possibility. Any place in life that has failed and collapsed and ended in despair. It is like an old potted plant - dead and thrown into the compost pile, forgotten and abandoned.

And when you look later, out of that deadness has come a new shoot — a plant blooming with new possibilities and promise. The poem imagines that God can and does raise up new life where none seemed possible. They begin in a way we would not have thought of until they make a move and we suddenly notice an alternative beyond our horizon. The work of Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation will be done by new shoots that seem to offer no new chance.

This was revealed to me as I participated in a "Gang Summit" in May of this year. Members of gangs and former members of gangs — men and women African-American and Latino — came together in free space to declare an end to the killings. They laid down their weapons. They took off their colours, they ended the hostilities one against the other and they affirmed a road to peace and wholeness. They asked forgiveness from those they had harmed, they begun to turn in the direction of justice, job security and hope for their communities. At the conclusion of the Gang Summit, the Rev. Mac Charles Jones, a member of the WCC Central Committee and the Pastor of a church which hosted the Gang Summit, open the doors of his church and offered the possibility for other gang members from his local community, young men who had not agreed to this peace initiative to come forward. There was a long wait and no-one came to them. Suddenly two young men entered the doors and walked into the pulpit as the congregation shouted, applauded and some cried. The two young men walked into the arms of Mac Charles Jones and after a very emotional moment spoke. He said "Before this summit - this brother and I were enemies. I had intended to kill him. Today I want you to know that I am taking off my colours. He is no longer my enemy. He is my brother." A shoot from a stump that no-one thought possible offering à path to new life. It is a path from the bottom up — not the top down.

Verse 2: On this shoot will rest the Spirit of the Lord

The Isaiah poet knows that those who pursue the path of Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation are driven and authorized by God's Spirit. The Spirit — the wind and breath of God is the inexplicable, irresistible force of God's purpose and power that blows uninvited into our lives. What it does is destabilize, decentre and disorient and cause us to break with all our normalities. We are indeed blown away when the wind of God blows — strangely filled with power, resolve, daring imagination and we take a move outside of long established routines.

When Mac Charles Jones asked one of the gang members why he joined the summit for peace, why he had laid down his weapons. He said — "I don't know, what got into me. One day I just woke up! It didn't make sense to keep on killing my brothers."

The poet in Isaiah knows what gets into the stump and causes new shoots. It is the wind. It is the Spirit. It is the Spirit of God. It is the force, energy and authority and permit of God to push us outside of ourselves — to give ourselves over to the purposes of God that are larger than our old controlled selves. We cannot programme or summon that wind. But we know that when risks are run, energy is strangely given, as are power and joy — none of which can happen until we move.

It is a peculiar wind that is given to a shoot — a wind of wisdom and understanding in which we notice for the first time what is going on. The wind makes clear. It is a Spirit of counsel and of power, of good discernment and a stronger energy for courage — old selves blown away — old fears over-come, old patterns broken open.

And what does the wind-blown shoot do? They choose a more excellent way — a way that breaks with convention and explores the alternatives.

Verse 3-4: They will not judge by what they see with their eyes (not impressed by appearances). Or not decide by what they hear with their ears (not swayed by rumour and gossip and pressure) but with righteousness they will judge the needy, with justice they give decisions for the poor of the earth — righteousness will be the sword around their belt and faithfulness the sash around their waist. Isn't it strange that in this poetic vision of peace, issues of justice are immediately put on the table? This odd, unexpected power, advocacy and courage to redress injustice. The poet knows that the issues of peace are essentially issues of justice. Some have too much, more than their share, others have not enough — less than their proper amount.

The poet knows that if there is to be peace, economic domination must be reversed, economic disadvantage must be corrected; and that requires sharing goods, redeploying resources, re-assigning land and re-imagining the norms of adequacy, worth and qualification.

When we move from verse 5 to 6 we have to make a big leap. It's a trend of thought and moves from talk about justice and righteousness into speech about wolves, lambs, leopards and goats. They are connected by the poet, but we are not told how we have been considering how we can intervene into human affairs — specifically into situations of injustice that produce more and more poor people. But now we make a move into the non-human world. The poet dares to suggest that transformed human relations which break the vicious cycles of exploitation and oppression really do impinge upon the health of the created order. Therefore we can assume that the relation of verses 1-5 to 6-9 is cause and effect. The work of

new human relations has the effect of new creation. The poet knows that one act towards a neighbour in need has cosmic import and will impinge upon creation in healing ways. One less gesture of greed will let one tree live. One act of mercy will save us from one load of pollution. One act of discipline may prevent one swath of poisonous chemicals. Human choices matter for the whole of creation.

Verses 6-7-8
The wolf will live with the lamb
The leopard will lie down with the goat
The calf and the lion and the yearling together
And a little child will lead them.

The poet takes the most obvious and long-standing hostilities from the non-human world; wolf-lamb, leopard-goat, calf-lion, cow-bear, lion-ox. All of these are endless hostilities in which a strong one will devour a weak one, a big one will eat a little one, the wild one threatens the domesticated one. The world can continue its sorry way to self-destruction rooted in fear and hate and greed. The vicious cycles grind relentlessly, taking in more and more scope, until we die, we and the wild animals, the birds, and the fish. The death-makers know the relentless way to death.

Then, abruptly, this poem comes with its statement of inversion and transformation — new human action transforms creation. The creation at enmity can come to community. What we thought was "natural" hostility turns out to be long-practised and unnecessary distortion.

The poet says it need not be so. Do not send a jaded, armed adult in to stir up the hostilities of creation. There is a more excellent way. Send a little child, a peace-maker, a vulnerable, innocent child who generates no fear, who enacts no hate, who smells of no intimidation.

In picturing this jungle on its way to transformation, the poet mentions a little child, an infant, a young child. A little heir of David's house, the Christ child, any child endowed with innocence and vulnerability. Any little one, any peace-maker, any human agent who has the capacity to authorize creation away from hostility, conflict, competition, and over-pressed productivity back to communication, sabbath, doxology, well-being, shalom.

Verse 9
They will neither harm nor
destroy on all my holy mountain
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

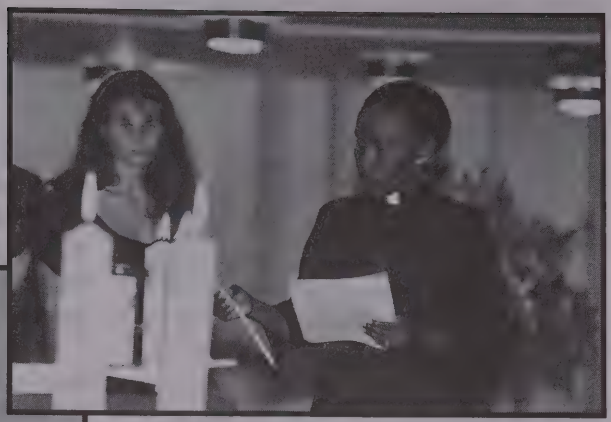
This is the promise of God and I believe that it will come through concrete acts of newness and inversion. It will come in unexpected places and ways, through current and former members of gangs. It will come through Indigenous Peoples and movements of the racially oppressed. It will come through the SISTERS network, Dalits and yes, even us — this odd collection of sisters and brothers who continue to believe in a dream about justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Knowledge of the Lord is the awareness that the power for new life is available and given to those who act. There comes in this process the discovery that God is good. A good friend who invites us to friendship. The earth is not yet covered with that knowledge. But there are patches of newness performed by odd people like us, powered by the wind, spirit and breath of God. And where there are patches of justice, peace, integrity for creation, there is less hurting and less destroying, all over the earth.

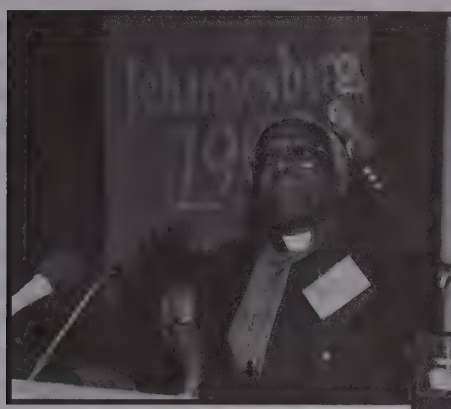
Our vocation does not lie in being safe, being big or being secure or being in control, but it lies in the newness of God given to us in birth and in baptism.

"They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." We are here for nothing other than this. And so we move forward into the future that is still open, believing in the promise and possibility of the Word of God. Let us move with courage and hope always reaching for an earth filled with justice, peace and the integrity of creation. Let us move forward believing that if God be for us, who in the world can prevail against us!

CENTRAL COMMITTEE IMAGES

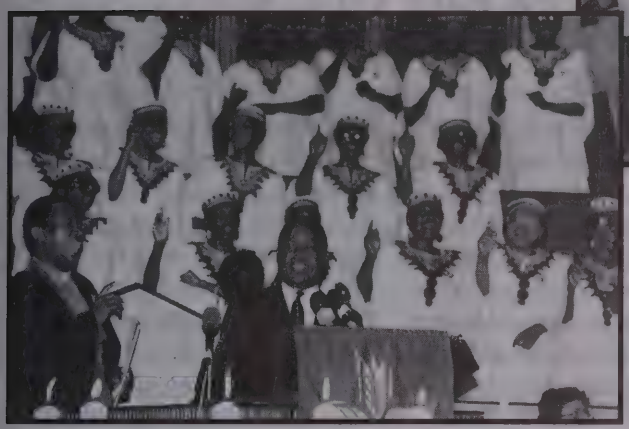


Candles lit by Rev. Zodwa Memela at Opening Worship, held at Johannesburg's Central Methodist Mission, standing next to her Cristina Bösenberg, Unit III Commissioner from Argentina.



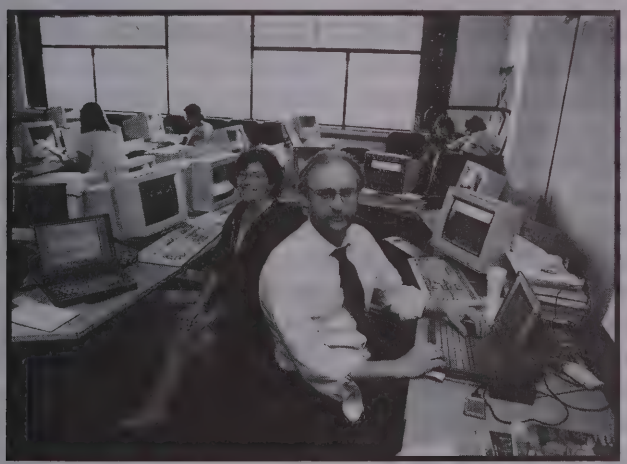
Archbishop Tutu makes a point ...

... and delegates launch into a rousing hymn.



Rev. Frank Chikane and the IMILONJI KANTU Choir.

The service was opened with a prayer of adoration by Kano Mofokeng, a 10-year-old boy from Johannesburg. Standing next to him, anti-apartheid veteran, Rev. Beyers Naudé .



Computer experts, Catherine Inoubli and David Pozzi-Johnson and their team provide vital services.

Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk, Russian Orthodox Church, congratulates Archbishop Anastasios of Tirana and All Albania as his Church is received into WCC membership.

pictures by peter williams, wcc

YOUTH ADVISORS SPEAK ABOUT CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Bob Scott interviewed four youth advisors at the WCC Central Committee in Johannesburg in January

Bob Scott: What are the major issues you have seen emerge here at the Central Committee?

Kelebohile Joyce Bohloko: I am very happy that young people are part of the Central Committee. The issue of HIV/AIDS is a really important issue to me, because as young people, we are the future.

Simon Moglia: We have raised the issue of where the ecumenical movement is going and whether it is achieving anything. Maybe we have slowed down a little bit on issues like common communion and the issues of baptism, eucharist and ministry. But we are conscious we often say we are moving 'towards' a lot of things, but not actually achieving them.

The plenary on issues of sexuality highlighted that there are some issues which people are just not willing to talk about but which young people want action on. If that means that there are some member churches who will threaten to walk out or not be a part of it, then I think that is a crucial issue we face. Where is the commitment to talk about the difficult things? It seems OK to talk about the easy things or the things that we agree we can't agree on. I think it is an issue when people don't even want to talk together. And they are usually the issues which marginalise young people.

Ana Paula K.S. da Rocha: Its the first time that I have been in this kind of meeting. And I think what has affected me most was the women's plenary and the very human issue of war and rape. It shows us that sometimes culture and certain ways of life can make a person very unhappy about their life. And we need to recognise that they are around us all the time and that we, as church, should do something more to help these kind of people.

Valamotu Palu: One of the major issues for me is violence - not just against women or young people only, but violence against human beings.

Its really difficult to see how we can relate to it because we come from different denominations, different cultures, different places and it is so difficult to know how we can work together. I know it is difficult for me to accept something that is not related to my culture; difficult to accept something that does not go together with my religious belief. So I still see there is a big issue within the ecumenical movement.

There is still a barrier within the ecumenical movement.

BS. One of the significant things about this Central Committee is the leadership being offered by young people, both among the advisors, delegates, and the stewards. I have no doubt about that. My question is: do you consider the adults here are offering leadership to the church?

APdaR: At first I became very frustrated about the people here. A lot of them repeat things that have already been said in the plenary. The same thing happens in the unit committees. Sometimes someone says something really important, trying to discover how the local church can take these issues into their own hands and do something different. But sometimes people have a very strong opinion of themselves and, most of the time, I don't think that is the opinion of the other churches.

KJB: According to my observation it is good to have to discuss all these issues at the international level but I am worried about the regional and the local level where you find people who are occupying the higher positions are not part of us and they are not taking part in our issues.

So I suggest that whatever we discuss here at the Central Committee should also be put into the local structures.

Most of the delegates here are bishops, doctors and so on, and we should be concerned about just ordinary ministers or pastors, so that things can be implemented in our local structures.

VP: For sure there are many people within the Central Committee who fully support and are willing to offer leadership. But I also know there are some within this Central Committee who still stick to their own way — they are very slow to offer leadership, especially for young people. Its easy to discuss it at a global level but how we apply it at the local level is so difficult. This is another difficult issue. How they can offer leadership for us?

SM: As I think about leadership the thing what comes into my mind is service; because the Christian attitude to leadership is that of being a servant. So if you serve that is when you are leading. There are people who are definitely leading the ecumenical movement, which is the churches together, because they are really making decisions and wrestling with issues. These people are serving the ecumenical movement and therefore leading it. But I think there is a dilemma with some others who are still unclear —perhaps they can't be clear — and who think that their leadership of the church is to represent the opinion of everyone in their church and therefore not to move. Others consider that leadership is about talking about theology and maybe listening to the voice of God that may come through in the discussion in this place. And that is also leading the churches.

Of course there is also the issue of whether they are able to feed back and report well to the churches. I don't know about this,

BS: What are one or two words to describe this Central Committee for you?

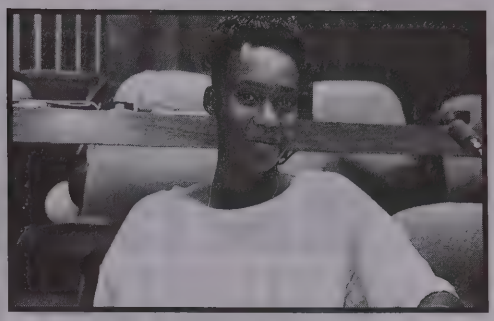
SM: I see issues in which we have begun to find the edge, over which some are not willing to go.

KJB: For me, as a citizen of South Africa, I see that some of the issues raised are common in all countries. It has been a great help for the leadership of this country, especially the political organisations, to have this meeting here and maybe, as time goes on, some of the issues discussed can be taken up here in South Africa.

VP: In Tonga there is a phrase we use: "Fofola e Fala kae alea e Kainga". The Fala is a fine mat for a special occasion. If the family wishes to discuss an important matter, they spread the mat as a foundation and let all the family sit on the mat and share their ideas. This is the possibility for them to work together, in both happy and sad situatons. To us this is a wonderful time in our lives.

Coming to this Central Committee is like getting together the family of God, which is the churches sharing ideas and trying to find out how to work together. Even though I know its very difficult because there are many people here so strict to their religion or their faith. But I see how the doors are slowly opening up for people to share. I am really interested in sitting among the Central Committee. I learn a lot and I think I take something with me back home.

APdaR: Its the way and the place where people can show their lives. Its a place to share. But of course we should take the things into our hands and share with the people in our own countries the things we have learned here.



Kelebohile Joyce BOHLOKO, from South Africa, works with the South African Council of Churches as a youth worker in their Vaal branch. She was one of the WCC delegation to the Ecumenical Global Gathering of Youth and Students in Brazil, July 1993.

Ms Valamotu PALU of Tonga is co-moderator of the WCC Mandated Working Group for Youth. During this Central Committee she was elected as a member of both Central and Executive Committee replacing another member from the Pacific who resigned. She also attended EGGYS.

Simon MOGLIA, from Australia, is the (part-time) Youth Secretary of the Australian Council of Churches. He also represented the Australian National EGGYS Committee at the EGGYS Gathering.

photos by peter williams, wcc

Ms Ana Paula K S da ROCHA of Brazil is a member of the World Methodist Youth Council and a youth leader of the Methodist Church of Brazil. She was a steward to the EGGYS Gathering in Brazil.

WCC CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETS IN SOUTH AFRICA

A SUMMARY OF DECISIONS (✍)

Taken from the WCC Communication Department Media Release

- The choice of a site - Harare - for the World Council of Churches' Eighth Assembly in 1998 was clearly the most keenly awaited decision by the WCC Central Committee, which met in Johannesburg 20-28 January. But the setting and timing of the meeting - in South Africa three months before national elections - left an inevitable imprint on the nearly 400 people present and on the Committee's discussions and actions.

The meeting, first of a WCC governing body in South Africa, came after more than thirty years during which the WCC's concerted campaign against apartheid made it the target of bitter opposition from the South African government and some churches. The impact of the setting was heightened by a stirring opening worship service in the Central Methodist Mission in downtown Johannesburg. A plenary presentation on South Africa the next day ended with a dramatic address by Anglican archbishop of Cape Town Desmond Tutu. The Nobel Peace Prize laureate thanked the WCC and the churches of the world for support during years of struggle and said: "If we notch up a victory against apartheid, it is your victory."

During its sessions, the Central Committee also addressed several current international concerns (Africa, South Africa, the former Yugoslavia and global warming) and listened to plenary presentations in seven areas of ongoing ecumenical concern (Faith and Order, WCC-Roman Catholic relations, the laity, violence against women, HIV/AIDS, youth and ecumenism at the national level). At the beginning of the second week, Committee members divided into five groups to look particularly at issues arising from the work of the WCC's four programme units and General Secretariat. Recommendations and reports from these committees were adopted and received during the last two days.

✍ By a vote of 70 to 41 to 6, the Committee chose **Harare** (over Amsterdam and Bucharest) **as the venue for the Eighth Assembly** in August 1998. A joyful Bishop Jonathan Siyachitema, president of the Zimbabwe Council of Churches, reminded the Committee that the invitation to Harare had been endorsed by the Roman Catholic bishops and African Independent Churches in the country. Christians in Zimbabwe welcomed and accepted the challenge to host the Assembly: "small as we are, young as we are as a country, we will do our best," he promised.

✍ After lengthy discussions, the Committee could not agree on the precise wording of a brief and engaging **Eighth Assembly theme** that would reflect a wide variety of current ecumenical concerns and translate easily into various languages. There was general agreement that the theme should reflect the biblical motif of **"jubilee"**, but all the formulations proposed by the Executive Committee, General Secretariat committee and a small group appointed on the next-to-last day met with objections. Further work will now be done, and Central Committee members will be asked to approve a proposal by postal vote.

✍ In other Assembly-related actions, the Committee elected 21 of its members to an **Assembly Planning Committee**, to be chaired by Swedish Lutheran Bishop Jonas Jonson, and chose an 18-member **Assembly Worship Committee**, whose moderator will be Uniting Church in Australia pastor Dorothy McMahon. Also discussed were the historically difficult issue of procedures for elections at the Assembly, guidelines for determining allocation of Assembly seats to member churches and proposals for the nature and style of the Assembly. Final decisions on these will be taken by the Executive Committee or by the Central Committee at its September 1995 meeting in Nashville, Tennessee (USA).

✍ In its **statement on South Africa** the Committee underscored several issues concerning the forthcoming elections: the right of all citizens to participate, an intensified need for international monitors and the urgency of supporting the churches' work in voter education and education for democracy. It also called for support of efforts by the Transitional Executive Council and the parliament which will be elected "to reconstruct society through the total reform of national structures of governance and of the national economy". South African churches were asked "to persist in the search for a new moral community" and "to construct a new, inclusive and vital ecumenical movement to confront the challenge to reconstruct and reconcile South Africa". In a separate action, the Committee called for "the lifting

of all sanctions and other financial and economic pressures which the WCC has supported for 14 years as a means to end apartheid and encourage companies to (re)invest in South Africa according to the Code of Conduct prepared by the South African Council of Churches".

✍ The Committee approved a paper on **"Contemporary Challenges to Africa"**, to be sent to member churches for study and action, and a statement on global warming. The latter says "the social and environmental degradation caused by accelerated climate change is sin against God and a violation of creation" and urges churches to "rediscover Christian teaching on lifestyles of sufficiency in personal lives and institutions". Later, the Committee approved for distribution to member churches a longer study document on the issue.

✍ Christians in the **former Yugoslavia** should "resist every attempt to use religious sentiment and loyalty in the service of aggressive nationalism", said a message to churches there. Intense debate was provoked by a reference in the message to the suffering caused to civilian populations by international sanctions against Serbia and Montenegro, but an amendment to delete it was defeated 55-39, with four abstentions.

✍ The issue of economic sanctions reappeared on the Committee's agenda during a long discussion of a recommendation (which it approved) to set up a WCC **"programme to overcome violence"** - an appeal made in the opening worship by Southern African Methodist presiding bishop Stanley Mogoba. The WCC was asked to study the effectiveness of sanctions as a nonviolent means of ending armed conflict and "to develop new theological approaches, consonant with the teachings of Christ, which start not with war and move to peace, but with the need for justice".

✍ Responding to the work of its unit committees, the Central Committee endorsed and encouraged work on several continuing concerns. In Unit I, a major ecumenical study programme on **"The Church as Koinonia"**, following up the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order last August, was affirmed. Preliminary plans by Unit II for a **conference on world mission and evangelism in late 1996** were endorsed. Its focus will be on gospel and cultures; and the Committee approved plans for an extensive study on that subject.

✍ Unit II was also asked to form a consultative group to study theological, ethical, justice and human rights issues raised by **HIV/AIDS** and to report in 1996.

✍ The Central Committee also approved a multi-year Unit III study of **"Theology of Life: Justice, Peace and Creation"** in order "to enrich and renew ecumenical social ethics and social thought". It called for an interim report at its next meeting on work being done by Unit I and Unit III on **ecclesiology and ethics**. It approved sending a WCC delegation to September's UN conference in Cairo on **population and development** and said a study document should be prepared on the issue, with a report on the conference and the study being made at its 1995 meeting. Responding to the report of a November 1993 team visit to Aboriginal people in Australia, the Committee urged the WCC to convene a **consultation of Indigenous Peoples** involved in land claim struggles against international mining consortiums.

✍ Also on the agenda for the 1995 Central Committee meeting will be the situation of the world's 20 million **refugees**, 26 million **displaced people** and millions of **migrant workers**. Unit IV was asked to develop a policy statement on this issue, suggesting specific ways in which churches can protect uprooted people, uphold their dignity and challenge increasing hostility to foreigners in many parts of the world. The Committee also asked the WCC and member churches to reflect on the biblical and theological roots of Christian service.

✍ Two senior **staff appointments** were made by the Committee: Thomas Fitzgerald (US, Ecumenical Patriarchate) was named executive director of Programme Unit I (Unity and Renewal), and Alan Falconer (Church of Scotland) director of Faith and Order.

✍ Three churches were welcomed into **WCC membership**: the Orthodox Autocephalous Church of Albania (about 750,000 members) and two African Anglican bodies, the Church of the Province of Burundi (200,000 members) and the Church of the Province of Rwanda (250,000 members). The latter two grow out of a reorganization of a larger Anglican church which was already a WCC member. The additions bring the total of WCC member churches to 324. Received as associate councils were national ecumenical bodies in Uganda, England, Madagascar and Sweden.

✍ Alluding to the Committee's intense debate of a call in the Unit III committee report for special focus on **"violence against lesbian women"**, General Secretary Konrad Raiser spoke of "deep divisions within this Central Committee and among member churches about the theological and ethical issues of human sexuality and sexual orientation". Since he sees it as his responsibility to make "every effort to maintain our fellowship in the face of sharp differences of conviction and to manifest pastoral sensitivity", he asked all "to refrain from urging the WCC to take positions on this issue, for which we are not responsibly prepared".

IMPRESSIONS OF SOUTH AFRICA

"My first five days in South Africa, in and around Durban, showed me some of the country's contradictions in microcosm. Staying first in KwaMashu township (mainly Zulu, and 80 per cent ANC supporters — portraits of Nelson Mandela were in great demand), when the only White I saw for three days stared back at me in the mirror. Endless discussions, alternating joyful hope and wary apprehension. "I saw a White man digging the road in the township the other day. If they can come and work with us, surely soon they'll come to live in the township with us too." Wonderful singing, hymns of joy and resurrection, as I sat squeezed on a bench amongst the family in the local Catholic Church. "That wasn't crowded", said Grandmother, scornfully. "We have to stand outside in the sun when **it's crowded**".

Next stop a few miles away, but the two places were worlds apart. An old school friend and her husband, the epitome of gracious living, with a beautiful house, garden, swimming pool, manicured lawns and high walls, a view over the countryside and out to sea. "We've worked hard in Africa all our lives. Now all we want is peace and quiet. No politics." And a whole lot more, but it would be disloyal to friendship to expose it.

Then two days seeing, with an ecumenical team, just how involved local churches are in working with the poorest of the poor. Squatter communities dotted around the outskirts of Durban, with the most meagre of resources — and Crisis Care (founded by the churches) encouraging, supporting them as they battle with local councils for adequate water supplies, sewerage, electricity, primary health and child care. They're in the thick of conflict resolution, too, when violence erupts and the going gets tough.

pictures by elizabeth salter, wcc

I stayed with a young Coloured Anglican priest and his wife. His previous parish had been overwhelmingly White. He was pastor to the whole community — but he never had a vote. The prospect of voting was challenging, daunting. It was important to get it right, at this momentous time.

Elizabeth Salter, Unit III Executive Secretary.

A PSALM FOR SOUTH AFRICA

Praise the name of the Lord
Praise God who has given us hope!
Praise God, you people living in the land of Africa
in the streets and farms of our God.

From high blue skies to hot deep mines
from dusty deserts to towering berg;
from grey littered streets to green veld and forest
From oceans edged with warm white beaches
to concrete cities and long black highways:
The Lord's will is sovereign.

Sing glory to the name of God who inspires hope
Because God has called South Africa to be saved.
We have learned for ourselves that God is great,
that our Lord surpasses all other gods.

The Lord struck down the idols of apartheid,
and denounced baasskap and racism.
The Lord sent signs and wonders against the false gospel, and
forced change upon its officials.

The Lord struck the heretics down in droves
and shattered the might of Vorster with a Biko.
Strydom broke on the Rock of Ages when he struck the
women; the granite of Verwoerd was splintered by the disinherited.
The Lord used Hector Peterson to turn a page of history,
And ravaged John Vorster Square by Neil Aggett.

Where is that Special Branch? Where are their "panel beaters"?
Where are the pagan idols, the pass books and the casspirs?
What befell the handcuffs and the sjamboks?

Where are the bombs that wiped out buildings,
that took our eyes, our limbs, our lives?
Where is the Group Areas Act; what happened to Influx Control?
These were the violent signs of powerlessness,
Of a god of make-believe, a power which could not endure.

O Lord, your name endures for ever!
Lord, your memory is ever fresh.
For you have vindicated your children
And honoured those who served God's people.

Woza Albert! Viva Sobukwe! Long live - Braam Fischer!
Hail Helen Joseph and Lilian Ngoyi! Amandla Chris Hani!
Remember "The Message" and the "Kairos Document"!
Praise God for those who gave us hope when all seemed hopeless!
This is the legacy put into the hands of our people,
This is the legacy given us by the Lord.

For we were a shattered scattered people.
On the pavements of New York and Amsterdam,
By the waters of London and Geneva,
We sought to sing our songs, but wept.
They welcomed us under the starry skies of Somafco and Dakawa,
On the streets of Lusaka and Harare,
But how could we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?

Then we heard the promise of the Lord:
"I will bring your offspring from the east,
and gather you from the west.
To the north I will say, "Give them up"
and to the south: "Do not hold them".
Bring back my sons from far away,
my daughters from the end of the earth.
All those who bear my name,
whom I have created for my glory,
whom I have formed, whom I have made."

Yet these seemed foolish idle words.
The System had the money and the armies.
Their voices fed the programmes to the media.
They held Parliament and legislation in their hands.
The ear of the North was theirs,
and the mouth of western oppressors,
Their investment put a foot upon our neck,
and held migrant labour in their grasp.

The people of the Lord had nothing to withstand the onslaught.
No guns. No money. No media. No authority.
We were naked, hungry, and homeless before the tyrant:
No power. No justice. No political recognition.

But the people of the Lord were given faith and hope!
We knew the Lord would lead us to the Promised Land!
We knew the Lord would liberate us and our oppressors!
And now the Lord is bringing in the victory!
Now the Lord is bringing the victory of Hope: Allelujah!
Before us lies the challenge of democracy,
the pain of an economy ruined by the greedy few.
What good news do we have for the poor?
Where is the liberty for the captives?
What sight do we offer to the blind?
What freedom to the downtrodden?
How dare we announce the day has come
when the Lord will save his people?

We dare because our hope is in the Lord our God,
Who has saved the people of Africa, and will save.
We dare because we can trust the Lord our God, and say:
Yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
Your ruling power will surely liberate all people.

Praise the name of the Lord!
Praise God who gives us hope!
In the streets and farms of the Lord:
Praise God you people living in the land of Africa!

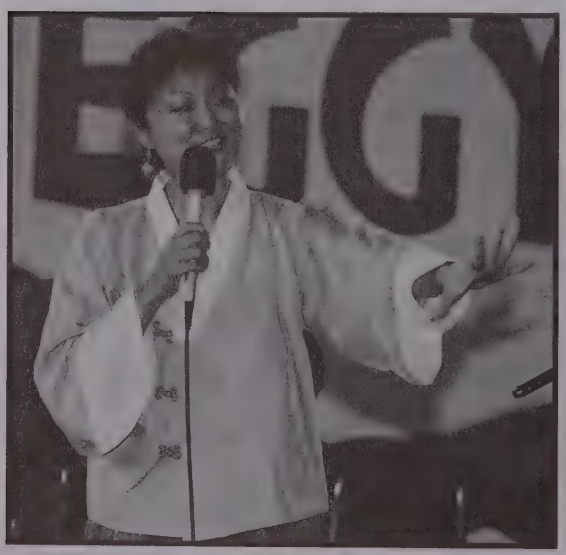
EGGYS THE GATHER

BRAZIL, JULY 10TH - 26TH, 1993

The long awaited gathering of more than 500 youth and students in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, had finally become a reality by July 10th, and was to last until July 26th,1993. During these two and a half weeks, 524 vibrant, enthusiastic Youth Ambassadors of some 81 countries, from 8 regions of the world and representing some 12 Christian denominations were to re-define and challenge all sorts of long held beliefs including the role of youths in our churches and societies and their place in the ecumenical movement. The following youth organizations were represented:

International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS)
International Young Catholic Students (IYCS)
International Young Catholic Workers (IYCW)
Lutheran World Federation (LWF)
SYNDESMOS (The Fellowship of Orthodox Youth)
World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Associations (YMCA)
World Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)
World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC)
World Council of Churches (WCC)
World Student Christian Federation (WSCF)

The story behind this seeming invasion of youths and students into Rio had started as much as five years ago. It had been hoped that along the way the EGGYS framework would not only empower youths and students but that they would, out of their joint search, create a new vision for future ecumenical collaboration. Thus EGGYS, both the process and the gathering, was to be "an experiment in ecumenical cooperation." One which would give direction to Youth and Student work for the next few years.



For many, these two and a half weeks would seem like a fitting culmination of this exercise in ecumenical cooperation between these ten youth and student organizations. To others, this was to be only the mid point activity in a process that would take it's future shape/form from the directives laid down by the youth and student leaders gathered in Brazil. Still for others, EGGYS held significance only as a major youth and student global gathering the likes of which had not taken place in over thirty years; and never in a Third World country and certainly never in a country the likes of Brazil with its beauty, its poverty, its street children, its favelas; its crime, its violence, its mystique and even its seeming ability to defy the monumental odds it faces in its effort to continue to survive in an increasingly hostile socio-economic and socio-political environment.

EXPOSURE TOURS

The exposure tours which took place July 10th - 15th were an opportunity provided for participants to live the reality of Brazil; and indeed to contextualize many of the issues which had become working group themes of EGGYS. These exposure tours were organized to over 50 urban and rural community groups in several states; the most extensive of which were held in the areas of Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Bahia, Rio Grande do Sul, Fortaleza, Curitiba, Brasilia, Cuiaba, Recife, Porto Alegre, Pernambuco, Para. These exposure tours offered delegates the rare privilege to visit and in some cases live with people in these communities of hope. For many young people these five days were to be an unforgettable and often life changing and challenging experience.

DROPPING OUR MASKS, LIVING WITH OUR DIFFERENCES

July 16th - 26th: during this period, participants took part in a most ambitious programme of worship, Bible studies, inter-personal small groups —known as base groups— and workshops which focused on the six thematic areas of the gathering.

Three thought provoking key note addresses by the Rev. Dr. Emilio Castro, Professor Javier Igu-

EGGYS THE EVENT

inez, and Professor Hyung Kyung Chung in plenary all stimulated heated discussions, and in the case of Professor Chung caused a certain amount of controversy among participants. However, this varied and multi-dimensional agenda was felt by many participants to be too ambitious, too issue focused, and certainly left too little time for personal reflection.

These final ten days were not entirely all work oriented however; since there was a much lighter side to EGGYS in the form of very rich regional sharing which were dubbed "Agoras". Participants were treated to an almost nightly cultural extravaganza which featured the music, dances, foods, crafts, history and cultural traditions of each of the eight regions. These Agoras were for many among the highlights of the gathering. They clearly served to demonstrate our rich diversity and cultural heritage within each region. As one person noted of Agoras these were "A rich exchange from the heart, that included the gathering's most powerful moments". Along with the Agoras, the gathering was treated to much spontaneous singing and music.

THE CHALLENGES OF EGGYS

Convening an international, inter-cultural, and inter-religious gathering, brings with it a host of attendant problems which will finally determine it's failure or it's success. That EGGYS was a "Youth" encounter, in no way spared it from these potential hazards.

The EGGYS experienced several problems; chief among these were a few serious breakdowns in some areas of the administrative organization of the meeting; lack of clarity about the realistic expectations of the gathering; also the very divergent and differing levels of expectations of participants; lack of preparation of both participants and identified leaders of forums, Bible study, and base groups; lack of in depth Bible studies, even when innovative methods were attempted. It had been hoped that the Bible study sessions would be the theological anchor of the gathering. Instead they became perhaps the most controversial aspect of the gathering as they were the area around which there was least consensus. There was no time in the programme to explore in a concrete way areas for networking among groups and individuals engaged in similar areas of work or advocacy.

For me the most alarming shortcoming of EGGYS was the unwillingness of youths to be seriously challenged by each other where theirChristian beliefs and practices were concerned. When serious encounters took place on conflicting views, time and again the various groups retreated into a defence of the traditional line of thinking particular to their churches.

Finally, while EGGYS has clearly shown us that an ecumenical Youth and Students movement that is organically, ideologically and ecclesiologically homogeneous is not really possible. The success of the EGGYS will continue to be that it dared to tackle issues upon which our Churches are still divided or unclear (issues of unity, sexuality, alternative economic and political models, authority of the Bible, etc.). In many ways therefore the tensions which were created by EGGYS are perhaps a reflection of how far the ecumenical movement still has to go; but EGGYS also stands as a celebration of some of the movement's finest achievements.

Donnalie Edwards is from Antigua and has recently joined the Unit III Youth team as a Consultant. She taught English language and literature and Caribbean history for several years in St John's, Antigua and is now very active in voluntary youth work.

pictures by peter williams, wcc

Pleased to Meet You

Dear readers, now that the great reshuffle of Unit III is finally over we thought that you might like to get to know our staff teams more personnally. In this issue we will introduce the Editorial team of ECHOES, the Executive Director's office and the team on Economy, Ecology and Sustainable Society (ECOS). In the coming issues you will meet the staff teams of Youth, Women, Racism (PCR), and International Affairs (CCIA).

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE

Rev. Dr Samuel Kobia from Kenya is the Executive Director of Unit III and ***Eldri Jauch*** from the USA his assistant.

Michel Monjol from France is the Unit III Finance Officer and ***Aurita Staudenmann*** from Spain his assistant.

THE STAFF WORKING TEAM ON ECONOMY, ECOLOGY AND SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY (ECOS)

From left to right: Rob van Drimmelen, Claire Tierney, Peony Wong, rev. Israel Batista, Susie Kankolongo and rev. Wesley Granberg-.Michaelson

This team is the result of a merge between the former Church and Society sub-unit and the Commission on the Churches' Participation in Development.

Rob van Drimmelen from the Netherlands, (Executive Secretary) and ***Susie Kankolongo*** (Administrative Assistant) from Europe, work on issues related to Faith and Economic Life.

Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson from the USA, (Executive Secretary) and ***Peony Wong*** (Administrative Assistant) from Hong Kong, work on issues of Ecology and Ecclesiology & Ethics.

Rev. Israel Batista from Cuba, (Executive Secretary) and ***Claire Tierney*** (Administrative Assistant) from Ireland, work on issues related to Networks and Civil Society.

THE EDITORIAL TEAM OF ECHOES

Elizabeth Salter from the U.K. is Executive Secretary for issues related to Europe and Peace and Reconciliation in the International Affairs, Peace and Human Rights (CCIA) staff team.

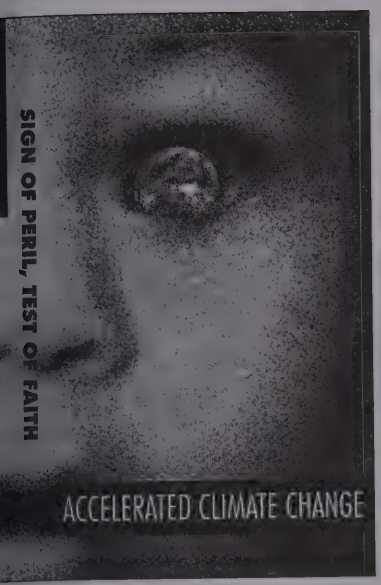
Rev. Bob Scott from Aotearoa-New Zealand is Executive Secretary on Racism, Minority and Indigenous Peoples' issues in Asia and the Pacific and Racism in Europe within the Programme to Combat Racism (PCR) staff team.

Susie Kankolongo from Europe is Administrative Assistant in the ECOS team. *(seated in the middle)*

photos by catherine ell and peter williams, wcc

ACCELERATED CLIMATE CHANGE

SIGN OF PERIL, TEST OF FAITH



The following text summarizes and quotes extensively from a 35-page study paper prepared by a WCC Unit III (Justice, Peace and Creation) ad hoc task group, debated at consultations in six regions, and finalized at an October 1993 consultation in the Netherlands with participants from 21 countries. The study paper was received by the WCC Central Committee meeting in Johannesburg which recommended that it be sent to WCC member churches in order to provide them with "a foundation for discussion with their people as well as dialogue and advocacy with governments, non-governmental organizations, industry, scientists, economists and international agencies."

"Scientifically-based evidence tells us that human activity is altering the conditions for life on Planet Earth", the paper begins. "Changes in the atmosphere caused by the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) are expected to lead to an increase in average global temperature, sea-level rise, and far-reaching climatic changes. The evidence comes to us as an unprecedented, extraordinary sign of this present time. Our interpretation of the sign is fraught with implications for the future well-being of human and other life and for the faithfulness of Christians to the Creator of all that is.

"Accelerated climate change represents not only a threat to life but also an inescapable issue of justice. It throws into sharp relief the unjust imbalance of wealth, resources and economic power between the rich and poor that characterizes the world today..."

"Global warming is more than just another environmental problem", the paper suggests. Instead, "It epitomizes the wide range of abuses which are taking place today." Thus, "by addressing the issue of global warming, we are also responding to the many other issues that face humankind today".

Chapter two looks at theological and ethical imperatives. God's concern for the whole of creation, as revealed through the scriptures, is affirmed. But because "people disobey God's will", the paper notes, "God's love takes on the face of judgement, and nature shares in the suffering that follows from human sin". In "the violation of intricate natural systems and the disruptive exploitation of vulnerable human communities, nature has become co-victim with the poor". Some societal factors affecting climate change - transnational corporations, mobility of people and goods, military activity and space programmes, deforestation and desertification, and population growth - are examined in chapter three. For each, the paper identifies related North-South justice and equity issues.

These are pursued in the next chapter, which deals with targets for GHG reduction. While "a continuous world-wide reduction of net CO_2 emissions by one to two per cent per year starting now" is a global target, there is disagreement on how to allocate targets nationally. "Basing entitlements on current emissions would establish the status quo, impede economic growth of developing countries and strengthen the economic domination of industrialized countries," the paper points out.

How then may such targets be implemented? Chapter five spells out what this might mean for the North: promoting energy efficiency and accelerating the shift to renewable, non-polluting sources of energy, encouraging reduction of energy use by requiring businesses to make changes in production and manufacture, and living more simply. The challenge to the South is to develop "alternative models of development that will enhance the quality of life in a framework of ecological balance and social justice", including appropriate technological development to "avoid the inefficient and wasteful use of energy that the North now has to correct".

The way is clear. But the existing growth model of development, in which consumption is seen as synonymous with development, is an obstacle to change. Here, the paper emphasizes, "We face tough moral decisions of equity. If there is not enough for everyone's greed

and everyone's need, priority must be given to need."

Turning to the churches, the paper suggests that "The crisis arising from accelerated climate change is a challenge to the life and witness of Christians... an unprecedented extraordinary sign of the present time".

Churches are called to witness, practice lifestyles of sufficiency and community, and collaborate with other networks and groups at local, national, regional and international levels.

The final chapter of the study paper is entitled "Spirituality and a renewed theological vision". It links theological reflection to the issue of climate change, quoting Bible passages that refer to:

• the fragility of human existence: "Climate change reminds us that we are frail creatures in a world of precarious balance ordained and sustained by the Creator... Climate change... makes the vulnerability of human existence plain and suggests that when humans think of themselves as rulers of creation they have taken the course of self-destruction..."

• the place of humanity in creation: "Humans are creatures whose life flourishes only as they respect their connection with the whole. Eating and even breathing remind us of our dependence on the cycles of nature. With every breath we owe gratitude to plants. With our unique freedom, however, we tend to forget or deny our continuing dependence on the rest of creation. The patterns of behaviour and industry that we establish for ourselves are often at odds with the ecological cycles into which they need to fit..."

• the "fall", and "dominion" over nature: "In the light of the gospel, we can no longer understand human freedom and responsibility, vocation and fulfilment, as limited or bound by a conception of 'the fall' that sanctions the 'rule' of men over women (Gen. 3:16) or contempt for the natural world as 'fallen'. These misinterpretations —together with the misuse of Genesis 1:28 whereby 'dominion' is treated as license to exploit rather than as responsible stewardship — have contributed to modern culture's propensity to devalue women and mistreat natural systems..."

• the nature of technology: "Technology as such is not the problem. The demands it is forced to serve represent an attempt at mastery over nature quite unmindful of God's call not only 'to till' but also 'to keep' this good earth (Gen. 2:15). It would be an illusion to think we can avoid the further development of technology... The question is the kind of use made of technological possibilities... Technological development must not be regarded as an end in itself but as an instrument in the service of life... For some, the primary challenge of the ecological crisis is to technological imagination... We must recognize such expectations as highly presumptuous. Technology alone will not solve the problems. It has no 'fix' to let us continue on the present course while failing to change basic attitudes toward nature and clinging to the dream of technological mastery..."

• God's plan for the future: "The risks and threats before us raise the question of the future God has in store for humankind. There is a real possibility that accelerated climate change may make this planet uninhabitable for at least parts of humanity... But the Bible speaks of still another future beyond any destruction human beings are capable of..."

Evoking "the end of time" when "a new heaven and a new earth will appear", the paper concludes on a note of warning and hope: "The promise that the faithfulness of God's love will transcend even the frightening possibility of the end of life as we know it, does not mean that there is no need for caring about creation in the here and now... In faithfully seeking to transform the present unsustainable, unjust order, we may anticipate the final kingdom and enjoy some partial realization of its 'righteousness, peace, and joy' (Rom. 14:7) in our own time. Meanwhile, we continue to depend on God's grace, God's love for all creation."

As well as the recommendation that the document be sent to all WCC member churches, it is also recommended that the study paper be sent to other non-member churches, including the Roman Catholic Church. It will also be published and translated into other languages. In addition to receiving the study paper and recommending its wide distribution, the WCC Central Committee also adopted a Public Issues Statement on accelerated climate change, underscoring the urgency of this question.

Copies of the full study paper (in English, French, Spanish and German) may be obtained by requesting them from WCC Unit III, Publications.

WCC PUBLICATIONS

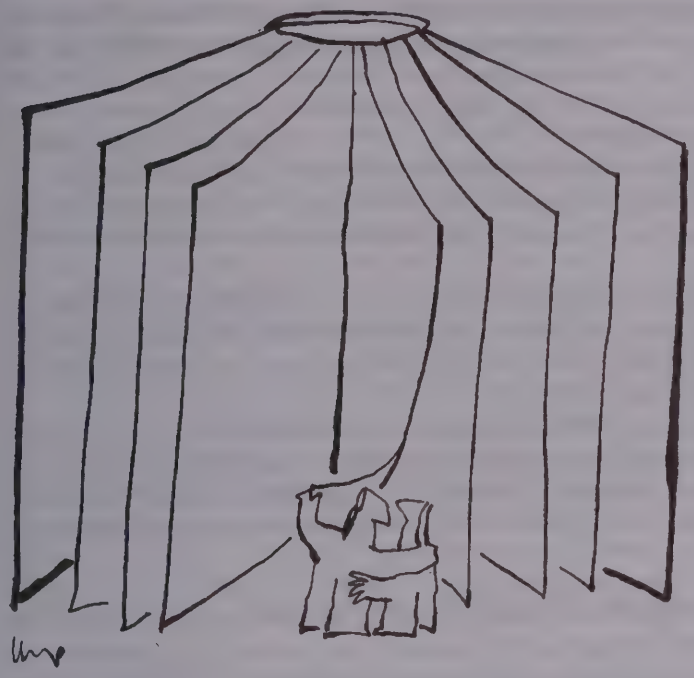
THE CUTTING EDGE

How Churches speak on social issues, Mark Ellingsen

A ground-breaking study of the churches' often controversial declaration son racism, development, ecology, war and peace, marriage, abortion, genetic engineering, social justice and socio-political ideologies. The book not only enables readers to compare different churches' positions on these "cutting-edge" issues, but also analyses in detail the values underlying the statements and how theological differences are (or are not) reflected in what churches say on social and ethical issues. An indispensable resource for anyone concerned with what the churches are saying about the contemporary world and a creative unfolding of the ecumenical implications of their speaking.

Mark Ellingsen is a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in North Carolina (USA). From 1982 to 1988 he was on the staff of the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg, France, where he did the research for this book.

Paperback, 394 pp., Sfr 39.90, US$ 27.50, £ 17.90. For the USA: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI. Published for the Institute for Ecumenical Research in Strasbourg, France.



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THE ECUMENICAL REVIEW

Volume 46, Number 1, January 1994

CIVIL SOCIETY, ECCLESIOLOGY, WORSHIP

...The general subject matter of the first five essays in this issue of The Ecumenical Review is "civil society". Although that term is by no means a new one, it has come into increasing prominence in ecumenical discussions of church and society during the past couple years. No doubt some of this usage has been jargon; and it is probably true that some who have used the term have done so with the unexamined assumption that every other society is basically like their own.

Nevertheless, the issues raised by the "civil society" discussion are critical ones, more critical than ever in the aftermath of the events in Eastern and Central Europe in the late 1980s, which have posed searching questions to churches, Christian groups and the ecumenical movements about their place and activity in society. The five essays here [by Julio de Santa Ana, Israel Batista, Ulrich Duchrow, Muto Ichiyo and Konrad Raiser], which address various facets of this discussion, are adapted from presentations made at a World Council of Churches consultation in Geneva in June 1993....

Editorial by Marlin VanElderen

Paperback, pp. 132, Sfr. 16,50, US$ 10.90, £ 7.50.

The above mentioned publications can be ordered from:

WCC Pulications
150, route de Ferney
P.O. Box 2100
1211 Geneva 2
Switzerland

Fax (...41 - 22) 791 .. ..

PUBLICATIONS of INTEREST

HOW JUST IS THE MARKET ECONOMY?

by Edward Dommen, Quaker economist and President of the Ecumenical Theology Workshop in Geneva.

This brochure is intended to stimulate reflection on economic ethics in general by exploring the ethics of a particularly important part of the economy: the market. While it is suitable to individual reading, it is designed especially to support group discussion. It was commissioned by the Swiss-German centre for Protestant adult education, from whom a version in German can be obtained (Geschäftstelle Theologiekurs, Rita Berger, CH-7222 Mittellunden).

The English version can be obtained from the WCC Unit III Publications.

CULTIVATING KNOWLEDGE

Genetic Diversity, Farmer Experimentation and Crop Research

Book by Walter de Boef, Kojo Amanor and Kate Wellard, with Anthony Bebbington.

The international debate on biodiversity has resulted in renewed interest in the role of farmers and local communities the management of natural resources and crop genetic diversity. The local varieties of crops which have been developed by farmers have made a great contribution to plant breeding genetic resources in the North. In recent years it has become apparent that local crop diversity in the South is threatened by the promotion of modern varieties promising higher yields. This book reflects new approaches and concepts in the field of conservation and the development of local crops. *continue on following page*

Case studies from Africa, Latin America and Asia address these issues from different angles, examining the significance of local knowledge, and documenting new approaches and methodologies. The book looks at the policy issues raised by the expansion of agribusiness, and the need to consider the interests of small-scale farmers.

The authors come from a variety of backgrounds, from plant breeders to anthropologists, international researchers to NGO development workers and lobbyists, and present a number of different views and perspectives on the subject. The editors work at Wageningen Agricultural University and the Centre for Genetic Resources, the Netherlands, and the Overseas Development Institute, UK.

Cultivating Knowledge will be of interest to researchers from biological and social backgrounds, as well as people with a more practical interest. The book is a valuable introduction to this new field, and will be of use to university teachers and students in the agricultural, biological, and social sciences. It places farmers at the centre of crop development and genetic diversity, and through this focus challenges the dominant models in formal crop research.

224 pp. approx. 229 x 150mm. October 1993. Hardback: £ 22.50, US$ 42.95. Paperback: £ 9.95, US$ 17.50
Discount for bulk orders of more than 10 copies.

Sales Office: Intermediate Technology Publications Ltd. 103-105 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4HH, UK
In the USA, IT Publications' books are available from Women, Ink., 777 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017.

WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA NEWS

(WIDA NEWS)

The Pioneer Agency for Development in Africa (PADA) has launched a Newsletter for networking among African and Third World women.

Africa's greatest asset is its human resources. It has a population of about 550 million, of which women constitute 52 per cent. Women play a central role in bearing and raising children, in the creation of household assets — including food production.

Women are both agents of development and agents of change. But the work they do is undervalued, unrecognised and not recorded. Also women earn less, own less and control less. PADA is, therefore, committed to the promotion of the role of women in development through the production and publication of WIDA NEWS.

PUBLICATIONS of INTEREST

WIDA News mean that networking can begin in earnest. African/Third World Countries can share experiences, skills and knowledge; they can learn from one another and work in solidarity; they can draw strength from one another and realise that they are not working in isolation; and more importantly, women will continue to play positive roles in their families and communities as a whole.

- Do you belong to an effective women's organisation?
- Are there any unique programmes involving both men & women in development in your area?
- Are you part of any women's movement? Tell us about it!
- Do you have original Africa/Third World poems, arts, folk stories, etc?
- Have you got information on forthcoming conferences, seminars, workshops, etc?
- We want book and film reviews, and music from Africa/Third world.

Please send correspondence to:

The Coordinator / WIDA News, PADA Consultancy Ltd
21 Addington House, Stockwell Road, London SW9 0TZ
(Tel: 071 274 5252 - Fax: 071 233 1747)

INCLUDING WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES IN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

A RESOURCE GUIDE

Of the estimated 250 million women in the world today who are considered disabled, approximately 3/4 live in "developing" countries. International development programmes, however, even those specifically focusing on women, have rarely addressed the needs of women with disabilities, nor have they included women with disabilities in community development ventures.

Women with disabilities experience double discrimination for being both female and disabled. Women with disabilities in poor countries are likely to be unemployed, destitute, to receive less food, to be illiterate and without vocational training. Stigmatized within families, they are often hidden and isolated, are less likely to marry, and more likely to be abandoned with children. Women with disabilities lack access to reproductive information, and face unauthorized sterilization and having children removed from their care. The few rehabilitation services that exist prioritize men and neglect the needs of women with disabilities.

Women with disabilities are a powerful untapped resource for development programmes. It is time for women in development organisations to actively recruit and involve women with disabilities, to interrupt the cycle that keeps them stigmatized and isolated in their communities. Bridges must be forged between development organisations working with women, and women with disabilities that are working locally and internationally.

Mobility International, USA, (MIUSA), will soon offer one such bridge. Including Women with Disabilities in Development Projects, a booklet funded in part by the Global Fund for Women, promotes integration of women with disabilities into international community development efforts. The booklet offers resources and practical, low-cost strategies for making projects accessible, including non-English materials, bibliographies, and names of individuals and organisations which can provide information and expertise. Model programmes are examined which have successfully involved women with disabilities in development activities, describing what worked, what did not, and what work still remains.

Including Women with Disabilities in Development Projects also aims to strengthen and expand networks that exist between women with disabilities around the world. In spite of the barriers they face, women with disabilities in every country are already involved in efforts to change their communities and become full and equal participants. Women with disabilities living and organising in "developing" countries share information and resources from their experiences: what issues are crucial, what positive steps have been taken, what still needs to be accomplished.

MIUSA is a non-profit organisation which promotes and facilitates international educational exchange for persons with disabilities, with emphasis on leadership training and advocacy for the rights of people with disabilities around the world.

MIUSA is soliciting information concerning participation of women with disabilities in international development activities, until April 1994. Including Women with Disabilities in Development Projects will be available in the fall of 1994, with translations in French and Spanish. It will also be available on cassette. Please contact MIUSA is you have access to relevant information, or if you would like to be notified when the booklet is available at the following address:

DWD Project, c/o Mobility International USA, P.O. Box 10767, Eugene, OR 97440 USA

PUBLICATIONS of INTEREST

A UNIQUE GUIDE ON DUTCH ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANISATIONS

"GREEN AND GREY BELOW SEA-LEVEL"

Many people and organisations in the South as well as in the North are involved in the debate on sustainable development. They are engaged in various ways in finding a balance between economic and social development and the environment, based on an equal distribution and a good management of the world's natural resources. International cooperation and exchange are important elements in their work and knowledge of the global institutional network enhances the opportunities for communication.

"Green and Grey" provides an overview of the labyrinth of groups, organisations and institutions in the Netherlands that are engaged in the field of environment and development. Arranged according to type, each organisation is described in a separate paragraph dealing with objectives, strategies, activities and target group. Government policies are described in some detail. The information is accessible and to the point, making for easy usage.

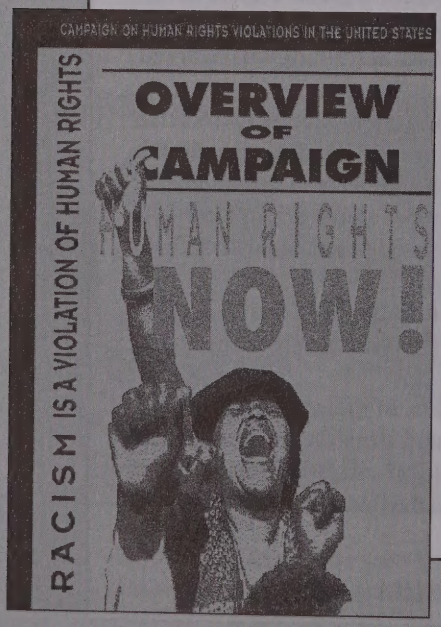
"Green and Grey" is intended particularly for organisations and persons in the South, who are looking for specific information, funds or ways to enhance cooperation and dialogue. However, persons in the North may also find it useful. The list of addresses at the back facilitates communication.

"Green and Grey below Sea Level"
An Access Guide to Environment and Development Organisations in the Netherlands
ISBN 90-801592-1-2
Prices (including shipment): Europe: Dfl. 20,00. Other countries: Dfl. 25,00/ US$ 15,00.
Orders can be sent to: Both ENDS, Damrak 28-30, 1012 LJ Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

UNIT III PUBLICATIONS

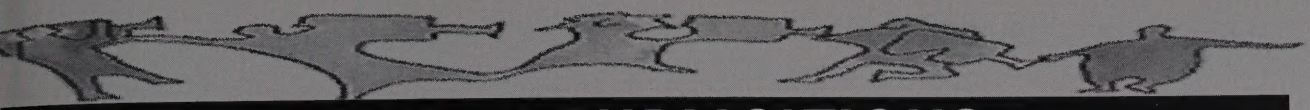
U.S. CAMPAIGN ON RACISM AS A HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION

The World Council of Churches (WCC) and the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCCCUSA) are co-sponsoring a year- long campaign to investigate human rights violations in the United States. The main objectives of the campaign are 1) to raise the level of awareness of racism as a violation of human rights, 2) to provide an opportunity for local and regional grassroots organizations to develop new relationships/



partnerships with each other, as well as with churches, 3) to challenge local congregations and ecumenical bodies to become more effective instruments in confronting violations of human rights resulting from racism, 4) to inform churches internationally about racism and human rights violations in the United States and 5) to take the case to the United Nations.

The project consists of five phases. The first phase was Planning which included the refinement of the campaign concept, but most importantly the appointment of site coordinators in seven areas, the creation of a site committee in each area and outreach to congregations and grassroots organizations in each area. The campaign was launched on 10 December, 1993, (International Human Rights Day), in the second phase, with simultaneous Kick-Off Events in Pine Ridge, SD and Birmingham, AL. Educational Outreach Activities in each site



UNIT III PUBLICATIONS

are being conducted during the third phase of the campaign (March-September 1994). A Covenant for Congregations is being distributed which indicates how local congregations can be involved in the campaign. In addition, congregations in the hearing sites can participate in the Linkage Programme to discuss issues of racism and human rights with other congregations whose membership is of a different race or denomination than their own. The fourth phase will be the assessment of human rights violations in seven cities. An international eminent persons team will assess the evidence presented at Hearings 7-19 October, 1994, in New York, Chicago, Okmulgee, Oakland, El Paso, Birmingham and Washington, DC. The Findings from the hearings and other data complied by the project's staff will be presented to the United Nations Human Rights Commission and UN Special Rapporteur on Racism in February 1995. A Resource Packet based on the findings, that can be used by member churches in local congregations and grassroots organizations, will also be developed and disseminated during this phase.

For further information please contact:

WCC/NCC Campaign: Racism as a Violation of Human Rights
475 Riverside Drive, Suite 572
New York, NY 10115-0050 - USA
Phone (212) 870-2387
Fax (212) 870-3112

or:

WCC/Unit III, PCR
Deborah Robinson
P.O. Box 2100
1211 Geneva 2 - Switzerland
Phone +41-22-791.61.11 Fax +41-22-791.03.61

Copies of the all the Unit III publications can be ordered from Unit III, Publications.

Copies of ECHOES can be ordered from the Unit III publications office at the WCC. The average cost of producing and mailing ECHOES is of SFr 5.- (equivalent to US$ 3.00) per copy. Readers who can afford it are strongly encouraged to contribute. However, **please note** that any contributions under SFr 20.- (US$ 15.00) actually costs us more to cash than it is worth.

Individuals willing to express their commitment to the Unit III for Justice, Peace and Creation may also contribute in the same way.

Please make payment either by cheque in the name of the WCC or to the following bank accounts with a very clear mention that it is for ECHOES magazine, Unit III:

Postal cheque account
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Suisse
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Vijzelstraat 68-78
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1000 AK AMSTERDAM
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Account No. 99 5277-10 002 53

Bankers Trust Company
1, Bankers Trust Plaza
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Church St Station
New York, NY 10015
USA
Account No. 04-814-909

Toronto Dominion Bank
Toronto Dominion Centre Branch
55 King Street w. & Bay Street
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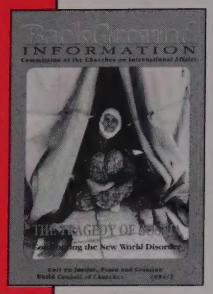
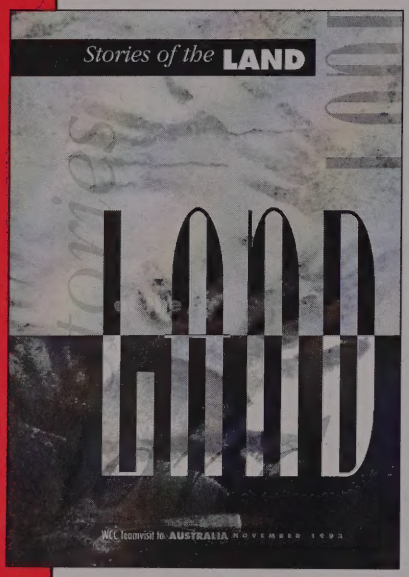


THE TRAGEDY OF BOSNIA

Confronting the New World Disorder

This publication in the series of BACKGROUND INFORMATION, produced by the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs, provides a balanced and thoughtful commentary on the continuing conflict in Bosnia, and the dilemmas it poses to the churches and the international community. It contains the following articles:

- WCC/CIMADE Mission to Serbian Territories of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Report by Erich Weingärtner
- The Continuing Drama on our Doorstep, by Jean Paul Nuñez
- War at the Crossroads: An Historical Guide Through the Balkan Labyrinth, by Bill Weinberg and Dorie Wilsnack, Balkan War Resource Group
- Selected statements and actions of the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches, the Serbian Orthodox Church and other church bodies.



STORIES OF THE LAND

In response to an initiative by the Aboriginal and Islander Commission of the Australian Council of Churches an invitation was issued for a WCC team to visit Australia. It took place November 18th-December 3rd 1993 and was primarily a pastoral one.

It was for the WCC to be in solidarity with Aboriginal and Islander People at a crucial time in their history. For them it has been a long saga of struggle. Throughout the WCC visit, Australia was grappling with issues of justice, racism and Native Title.

The Team was asked to listen to the voices of Aboriginal and Islander People and to facilitate the sharing of their stories.

The voices spoke of the land. They spoke of Aboriginal languages — always called simply 'language'. They spoke of Aboriginal Australia and White Australia; of Black fellas and White fellas; of 'mobs', which equates to groups or clans or tribes.

The Team travelled to many places in the vast continent of Australia: Cairns, Darwin, Derby, Perth, Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra, Alice Springs, Uluru and back to Cairns. Distances were great. Temperatures were high, sometimes 43 degrees centigrade. The land was red-gold and strong and beautiful. The voices were clear and articulate.

But the voices did not always say exactly the same thing about the current situation and proposed legislation on Native Title. It was clear there were different responses; different according to location, to immediate situations in relation to white fella's law, to degrees of integration and to levels of involvement in the political processes.

So the stories in the report need be read together. Selective reading will not reflect the complex reality of the Aboriginal and Islander People.

In the stories there are some names given. Sometimes there is only reference to a 'New Voice' or 'Woman's Voice'. Some preferred their names not be used. Permission was always sought to record the stories. Its a very moving story.

The Team consisted of:

* Bishop Leslie Boseto, from the Solomon Islands, a president of the WCC.
* Ms Mukami McCrum, from Kenya, now resident in Scotland; a member of the WCC Unit III Commission.
* Pablo Santos of the Aeta people of Zambales on the Philippine island of Luzon; President of the National Federation of Indigenous peoples of the Philippines; nominated to the team by the Christian Conference of Asia.

They were accompanied by:

* Rev. Bob Scott, one of the executive secretaries of the WCC Unit III Programme to Combat Racism.
* Ms Brenda Fitzpatrick, executive secretary, Communications, WCC's Unit IV.
* Ms Delphine Stanford, appointed as Aboriginal Liaison for the Team by the Aboriginal and Islander Commission of the Australian Council of Churches; a member of the WCC Unit III Working Group on Racism.

artwork heading by Centre for Research and Popular Education